

Highlights From The Dial of 1928

JANUARY

ISOLATED SUPERIORITY

Personae: The Collected Poems of Ezra Pound.

8vo. 231 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$3.50.

BY T. S. ELIOT

BY publishing his "collected poems" -- a collection remarkable because it represents also a rigorous selection and omission -- Mr Pound provokes us to another attempt to estimate his work. I am doubtful whether such a valuation is, or will ever be, quite possible for our generation; but even if not, it is worth while at least to enquire into the nature of our difficulty in criticizing his work.

Pound has had, and has an immense influence, but no disciples. For the absence of the latter, I think he is to be felicitated; or perhaps it does not matter an atom. He has been a great deal imitated, but that matters still less; and with his imitators neither I nor any one else can be concerned. But apart from imitation and plagiarism, there are these two things which are not the same: influence and discipleship. Sometimes they are united in the same persons; but I have suggested that Pound has great influence but no disciples. And I think that the reason is this: that influence can be exerted through form, whereas one makes disciples only among those who sympathize with the content. To illustrate by a very different case, Cardinal Newman has influenced a great number of people, but his disciples, if there are any, must be very few. But of Pound I believe that in form he foreran, excelled, and is still in advance of our own generation and even the literary generation after us; whereas his ideas are often those of the generation which preceded him.

It is an interesting anomaly, but perhaps not curious. What is curious is his complete and isolated superiority as a master of verse form. No one living has practised the art of verse with such austerity and devotion; and no one living has practised it with more success.) I make no exception of age or of country, including France and Germany; what there may be in other languages I cannot judge. Nor do I limit the "art of verse" by the necessary but dangerous word technique. A man who devises new rhythms is a man who extends and refines our sensibility; and that is not merely a matter

of "technique." | I have, in recent years, cursed Mr Pound often enough; for I am never sure that I can call my verse my own; just when I am most pleased with myself, I find that I have only caught up some echo from a verse of Pound's.

The term *vers-libres*, never a happy one, is happily dying out. We can now see that there was no movement, no revolution, and there is no formula. The only revolution was that Ezra Pound was born with a fine ear for verse. | He has enabled a few other persons, including myself, to improve their verse sense; so that he has improved poetry through other men as well as by himself. I cannot think of any one writing verse, of our generation and the next, whose verse (if any good) has not been improved by the study of Pound's. His poetry is an inexhaustible reference book of verse form. There is, in fact, no one else to study. One or two eminent writers have tried to take their lessons direct from Whitman. But (as their work shows) Whitman is not a safe model unless you have a better, or at least a more reliable ear than Whitman; it is wiser to absorb your Whitman through Pound.

From this point of view, I regret that the new volume should be a selection. Mr Pound has written some poems which I find rub me the wrong way; but I would not have any of them omitted, for there is something to be learned from every one. And besides, to tell the truth, the poems that annoy me are here: *Moeurs Contemporaines*. Mr Pound has an exquisite sense of humour, and his epistolary style is masterly; but the wit and humour in his verse...But that question would lead us to another aspect of the matter. Meanwhile, where are *In Tempore Senectutis* and the *Lament for Glaucus*? Another collection must be made after Mr Pound is dead.

There is another thing to be said about Pound's *Art of Verse*. As many persons prefer his early poems, I must record my conviction that his verse has steadily improved, and that the *Cantos* are the most interesting of all. This gives me the opportunity to make a gentle transition to the second part of my subject. Mr Wyndham Lewis, in *The Enemy*, has handled these *Cantos* rather roughly. (Where the *Cantos* are humorous or colloquial, I sympathize with him.) I think that the trouble is this: Mr Lewis, being a philosopher, is impatient with the content; not being a poet, he is not sufficiently interested in the form. Hence Mr Lewis is a little hasty, and might lead the inexperienced reader to believe that Pound's rhythms spring from the same source as those of Miss Stein. And this is wholly untrue: they have nothing in common. The only criticism which could be made of the *Cantos* is that Pound's auditory sense is perhaps superior to his visual sense. His eye is indeed remarkable, it is careful, comprehensive, and exact; but it is rare that he has an image of the maximum concentration, an image which combines the precise and concrete with a kind of

almost infinite suggestion. His verse, on the other hand, does everything that he wants it to do; it has the uniform rhythm running through it, combined with unlimited variability of mood. As for the meaning of the Cantos, that never worries me, and I do not believe that I care. I know that Pound has a scheme and a kind of philosophy behind it; it is quite enough for me that he thinks he knows what he is doing; I am glad that the philosophy is there, but I am not interested in it.

This brings us to the second problem about Pound. I confess that I am seldom interested in what he is saying, but only in the way he says it. That does not mean that he is saying nothing; for ways of saying nothing are not interesting. Swinburne's form is uninteresting, because he is literally saying next to nothing, and unless you mean something with your words they will do nothing for you. But Pound's philosophy, I suspect, is just a little antiquated. He began as the last disciple of the Nineties, and was much influenced by Mr Yeats and Mr Ford Madox Ford. He added his own extensive erudition, and proceeded to a curious syncretism which I do not think he has ever set in order. He is, of course, extremely Romantic. His Romance has enabled him to revive much that needed to be revived; he has made people read Dante who might never have read him; he has fought successfully the English conventions of good poetry, and has made his point that there are vital qualities of style which are found in Provengal and Italian verse and which are not always found in English verse. He has induced a more critical attitude towards Shakespeare ; he has put Guido Cavalcanti and Arnaut Daniel back "on the map," even for those who cannot read them. For all these gifts, and others, we cannot be too grateful: Pound's critical influence is immense, and beneficial. (I wish he would let me edit his critical essays, instead of doing it himself.) My own critical debt to him is as great as my debt in versification. Yet I feel that there is a muddle somewhere. Pound has gone on, and will go on, with vast and restless curiosity in everything that is said and written; it is not that he does not keep up with the times. But I sometimes wonder how he reconciles all his interests: how does he reconcile even Provengal and Italian poetry? He retains some mediaeval mysticism, without belief; this is mixed up with Mr Yeats's spooks (excellent creatures in their native bogs); and involved with Dr Berman's hormones; and a steam-roller of Confucian rationalism (the Religion of a Gentleman, and therefore an Inferior Religion) has flattened over the whole. So we are left with the question (which the unfinished Cantos make more pointed) what does Mr Pound believe?

PART OF CANTO XXVII
BY EZRA POUND

Copyright 1927 by Ezra Pound.

Sed et universus quoque ecclesie populus,
All rushed out and built the duomo,
Went as one man without leaders
And the perfect measure took form;
"Glielmo ciptadin" says the stone, "the author
"And Nicolao was the carver"
Whatever the meaning may be.
And they wrote for year after year
Refining the criterion,
Or they rose as the tops subsided:
Brumaire, Fructidor, Petrograd.
And Tovarisch lay in the wind.
And the sun lay over the wind.
And three forms became in the air
And hovered about him,
so that he said:
This machinery is very ancient,
surely we have heard this before.

And the waves like a forest
Where the wind is weightless in the leaves
But moving,

so that the sound runs upon sound.

Xarites, born of Venus and wine.
Carved stone upon stone.
But in sleep, in the waking dream,
Petal'd the air;

twig where but wind-streak had been;

Moving bough without root,
by Helios.
So that the Xarites bent over tovarisch,
And these are the labours of tovarisch,
That tovarisch lay in the earth,
And rose, and wrecked the house of the tyrants,
And that tovarisch then lay in the earth
And the Xarites bent over tovarisch.

These are the labours of tovarisch,
That tovarisch wrecked the house of the tyrants,
And rose, and talked folly on folly,
And walked forth and lay in the earth ;
And the Xarites bent over tovarisch.

And that tovarisch cursed and blessed without aim,

These are the labours of tovarisch, '
Saying:
"Me Cadmus sowed in the earth
And with the thirtieth autumn
I return to the earth that made me.
Let the five last build the wall:

I neither build nor reap.
That he came with the gold ships, Cadmus,
That he fought with the wisdom,
Cadmus,
of the gilded prows.

Nothing I build, and I reap
Nothing;
With the thirtieth autumn
I sleep, I sleep not,
I rot

and I build no wall.

Where was the wall of Eblis
At Ventadour, there now are the bees,

And in that court
Wild grass for their pleasure
That they carry back to the crevice
Where loose stone hangs upon stone.
I sailed never with Cadmus,
Lifted never stone above stone."

"Baked and eaten, tovarisch!

"Baked and eaten, tovarisch, my boy.

"That is your story. And up again,

"Up and at 'em. Laid never stone upon stone.'

"The air burst into leaf."

"Hung there flowered acanthus,
"Can you tell the down from the up?"

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE DIAL AWARD for 1927 was recently offered to Mr

Ezra Pound, and we are most happy to announce that he accepted it -- with this proviso:

"It is impossible for me to accept an award except on Cantos or on my verse as a whole...

"It wd. be stupid to make the award on prose-basis as my prose is mostly stop-gap; attempts to deal with transient states of murky imbecility or ignorance."

We agreed to the proviso without hesitation, indeed we had never any different notion about it. But as people who know more about verse are going to discuss Mr Pound's in these pages, we should like to draw attention briefly to another service of his to letters which many are aware of and which many seem anxious to forget.

Writers are the most ungrateful animals. They suck their orange as dry as they are able to, and forever after it disgusts them to have to think about that orange at all. The innumerable little contemptuous paragraphs uttered by the younger (up to 60) Parisian writers when Anatole France drew attention to himself by being buried are an exaggerated example of this disgust.

One uses a Parisian example because things are always clearest cut in Paris where the writers outside the Academy exhibit the charming unanimity of flying fish. Perhaps the only similarity between Mr Pound and Anatole France is that they both encouraged new writers. Where Anatole France encouraged mostly bad ones, it can be said that Mr Pound has never made a mistake. When he was foreign editor of The Little Review, The Little Review was the most interesting magazine of a quarter century. Furthermore his encouragement is worth something. Many an encomium is no more valuable than the hair oil applied after a hair cut, the aroma of which has been known to repel people.

What Mr Pound perceives he gives value to. Without any of the antics of generosity, he is the most generous of contemporary writers. And if he will not admit that he has written any good prose it may well be because of his belief that good prose is the expression only of hatred.

Apart entirely then from the influence of his verse, we can assert that Mr Pound is one of the most valuable forces in contemporary letters. This is not to say that he sees his ideas taking effect, his theories carried to any conclusion; it is rather a question of life blood.

from BRIEFER MENTION

Antheil and the Treatise on Harmony, with Supplementary Notes, by Ezra Pound (brochure, 16mo, 106 pages; Three Mountains Press: 10 francs). A sequence of pronunciamientos on music qualified by Mr Pound's customary penetration and restiveness. Particularly he is advocating the further development of rhythm, though recent emphasis on rhythm and the attempt to exploit a new technical area of art without the assistance of a new instrument shows signs of perishing. (In Stravinsky's *Sacre*, for instance, the rhythms are quite rudimentary -- conspicuously in the matter of simultaneous conflict -- as compared with what rhythm might be under the mechanical batons of the polymetronome.) On the whole, the critique is not so much an analysis as the statement of a position, so that one is left sharing not only the author's convictions but also his vagueness as to the best way of carrying them out.

THE POETRY OF CONCENTRATION

Hippotytus Temporizes. By H. D.
8vo. 139 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$5.

by CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

HOWEVER variously imagist performance may be esteemed, one should not under-rate the service that imagists have rendered poetry in their insistence that more than decorative, more perhaps than beautiful, it must be unique and absolute. To demand that poetry be "hard and clear" -- "exact," to insist that "concentration is of the very essence of poetry" is surely a not negligible step toward the inhibition of poetic deliquescence. If not all moods bear concentration, and if to set one's feelings forth "exactly" is only to show how trifling too many of them really are, then perhaps there is nothing so efficacious as the freedom of free verse as a winnowing principle, showing who are not poets as well as who are.

At any rate the poetry of H. D. seems easily enough to support the extremity of imagist tests. Infinitely wrought, "petal in the rift of carven petal," it is still free of preciousness and glitter, a poetry of concentration in good fact, of durable individuality. The imagists seem not more different from other poets than H. D. from her fellow imagists. Again, her achievement, or her endowment of originality is such that great as appears her debt to the Greeks, she seems upon strict comparison more unlike than like them. Freedom here is another name for complex disciplines, and achievements in technique none the less elaborate because their methods are but slightly apparent, for a singleness which in mood is perhaps natural,

but in expression is certainly sought -- with much patience, skill, and good fortune. Singleness of mood is evident enough through all of her work, and not least in the present play which, one would suppose, might deal with many moods. It is the passion for beauty as the quest of the private heart, beauty the inaccessible, beauty "set about with wrecks of ships." And it is expressed with manifest lyric singleness, an economy in which the goal of expression is achieved, apparently, by the mere disclosure of the symbols of feeling, symbols specific, consummate, but nearly bare of context, or even of connexion.



H.D., by Man Ray

The disadvantage of this way to poetry would seem to be its bias toward obscurity and discontinuity, its tendency to make the lyric a thing of chords and flashes: the ideal of "each perfect separate yet joined again beautiful" is not always achieved in its latter measure. Perhaps this is not a difficulty except to readers who are accustomed to read poetry in the same somewhat confined ways in which they read prose. But are not readers of this sort numerous, perhaps even most of us? Certainly it has been often enough noted of H. D. that though her poetic statement is nothing if not specific, it is at the same time vague in what it symbolizes. Who are the mysterious soliloquists of her poems and what are the episodes out of which they speak? It is not always clear, even with the minimum of clarity which one is ready to accept in the lyric. And if one is troubled by such questions he may be much troubled, though perhaps not rightly so, for if the property of the symbol is that it combines various orders of emotion for various readers, then the less specific symbol might well be powerful in proportion to its vagueness -- within certain limits, and granting, what one cannot fail to grant here, eminence of feeling in the poet who uses it. Yet the difficulty is not slight when it occurs, as it does in this case, in the service of a tract of poetic significance which is more than slightly removed from anything we can to-day call customary. Nor is the trouble mitigated by the focalism, the isolate intensity of

phrase which is so clear a part of this manner of "pearl and fire."

One may not be wrong, then, in taking it as a mark of the growth of H. D.'s art that these difficulties seem somewhat lessened in successive works, and in the present case are considerably reduced. It is not merely that choice of the dramatic form affords a valuable device of added poetic presence. The very conditions of the medium are in the interests of readers. The lyric interlocutors are here named and placed, and the intense images are intense to clearer ends. Further, the natural discontinuity of the dialogue itself seems an admirable spacing and setting off of H. D.'s selective sharpness. The play seems more dramatic lyric than lyric drama, and as lyric especially appropriate to her genius. At least an action in which Artemis so much figures -- Hippolytus' passion for Artemis is presented, and Phaedra's passion for Hippolytus, with the trick and its consequences, by which she gained her end -- such an action ought to be well suited to H. D.'s turns of feeling. For Artemis, the shy austere spirit of woodland loveliness, "essence of wood-things," "queen only of the soul," may in fact be taken as well representing that emotional vista which H. D. so perfectly indicates -- the passion of the heart to be alone with beauty. The present play, like the *Heliodora* and *Hymen* lyrics -- in the latter of which one may indeed observe the first suggestions of certain of the present personae -- like nearly every poem of H. D., whatever the subject or the circumstance, is in final purpose, a song of the inviolateness of beauty, beauty approachable only in singleness of heart.

Possibly it is not a large or various sum of things which is thus reiterated to us here. H. D. may be a sophisticate of poetry who has found certain rare modes to beauty among her responses to the beauties of archaic Greece. But if it is merely a sophisticate who writes

"What is song for
what use is song at all
if it cannot imprison the sea,
if it cannot beat down
in avalanche of fervour even the wind,
if it cannot drown out t
our human terror?"

then it is a sophisticate wise in passion as well as in precision. The orbit of this experience may not be large; but one can have no doubt that it passes through fundamental regions. Perhaps the love of beauty is too frail to be other than defeated and despoiled in any conflict with its more earthy congeners, as is here so lyrically figured. In the clash of passions it may chance that the worship

of Artemis vanishes in the grosser fires of "fair infinite Aphrodite." But though it vanish is it consumed? Can one think it an ephemeral or untypical human fineness that is embodied in Hippolytus' passion for "the mistress and the innermost power of the pure glade"? Artemis escapes men but not men Artemis.

MODERN ART

HENRY McBRIDE

SEATED on the benches in the court-room awaiting our turns to testify in the Brancusi case, I noticed an unusual ring upon Jacob Epstein's finger. The reporters in attendance appeared deeply impressed by Mr Epstein's sartorial splendour and did full justice to it in their accounts in the daily press, but I don't think any of them noticed the ring. "What is it?" I enquired. "A ruby," he replied. 'An Indian prince gave it me.' It was, in effect, sufficiently Indian. The large ruby had been embedded heavily into the gold which had been carved into the semblance of a snake.

I had forgotten it temporarily but it came to mind when I had progressed but a little into the New York exhibition of Mr Epstein's bronzes, at Ferargil's. The bronzes were so excessively Indian, so forcefully Indian! -- so very different, indeed, from the sort of thing encountered in Dr Katherine Mayo's new and sensational book, *Mother India*. 'The Indian Madonna and Child, in particular, were so aggressive that they might be supposed to have emanated in direct reply to Dr Mayo's awful accusation. No wonder the Indian prince gave Jacob Epstein that ring. He should have given him a lac of rupees, as well, and a white elephant, and a half-dozen nautch-girls, and -- but I am forgetting again; those bronzes were achieved long before Dr Mayo thought of her book. The Indian prince after all could only have been a disinterested art lover. Or do you suppose he could have foreseen Dr Katherine Mayo and the havoc she was to make of American sympathy with the Far East, and was preparing against the day?

In truth, I have a wretched memory, and another thing I completely forget, though I should know it, for I must have been told, is how Jacob Epstein became so Indian. The psychologists say that this sort of forgetting is due to indifference, which is something I'm sorry for, if true; and anyway, if I should be proved guilty of indifference to the Indianization, as such, of Jacob Epstein, I certainly am not indifferent to the process of his becoming so. Processes are always interesting. Why, I wonder, did he take

[copy missing in OS]

iton? When he might just as well, like Ralph Rackstraw in Pinafore, have remained an Eng-lish-mun!

Mr Epstein made an awfully good witness for Brancusi. He has immense social skill, and with distinct leanings toward the histrionic. He will be a great success in America, just as he has been in England. Jacob Epstein couldn't fail anywhere. His charm of manner was just as certain in the spacious court-room as when produced for short-range effects across a dinner-table. He was grandly patronizing to the presiding judge and to the opposition lawyer, speaking to them from a height -- as though to little children -- and, with the greatest virtuosity, screening his amusement from them though getting it to us on the back seats perfectly. Just the same, and this will illustrate to him what he is up against in his return to America after twenty-five years of burial in England, neither this judge nor that lawyer ever seemed to have heard of Mr Epstein before! It is always the legal game, I suppose, to discredit expert testimony, and all of Brancusi's well-wishers and witnesses were forced to reply to dull enquiries into their right to speak authoritatively upon questions of art. "Well, did you study anywhere?" asked the lawyer sceptically, when Jacob Epstein avowed himself to be a sculptor. "Yes, at the Art Students' League in New York, four years at Julien's, in Paris; and also at Carlorossi's, in Paris." "Well, have you anything to show for it?" "What do you mean?" "Any paper? Wouldn't they give you a diploma?" "Art schools are not like colleges . . ." began Mr Epstein incredulously, as though scarcely trusting his ears. "Did you or did you not secure a diploma? Yes or No?" thundered the attorney hammering his desk, in the approved lawyer manner. "I never heard of such a thing," said the sculptor, still smiling broadly. "Answer the question," said the judge, wearily. "No," replied Epstein meekly; and the opposing lawyer glared triumphantly around the room as though requesting the reporters to note especially that point.

But in the end, the bored judge, who looked as though he had never in his life had a job less to his taste than this task of deciding whether or no the Bird of Brancusi was a work of art or a dutiable object of utility, appeared to be impressed, in spite of himself, by Mr Epstein's enthusiasm for it; and gave out the official pronouncement that the title of a work of art did not necessarily describe it and consequently that, though the object in dispute did not represent a bird literally it could very well embody certain impressions in the artist's mind that had been aroused by the flight of a bird. He immediately quelled, though, the mounting rapture on the back benches, by murmuring to himself, sotto voce, that personally he thought all this sort of thing nonsense, and had he to choose himself, between Michael Angelo and Brancusi, he would choose Michael Angelo every time. Those were not

his exact words, of course, but approximately the burden of his refrain. In spite of this chilling lack of modernism, the little Brancusi coterie thought him a most excellent judge -- far better than they had dared to hope for -- and that in deciding the Bird not to be an object of utility, he had decided everything as far as the courts of law were concerned...The amusing farce cannot end just yet, however. A legally necessary deposition from the author of the Bird -- Brancusi is in Paris -- delays the final verdict another six weeks. It cannot affect critical opinion whichever way it goes.

In the meantime the Epstein exhibition is attended by crowds of people who are vaguely but visibly impressed. No instances of outraged opinion have as yet been recorded. A foreign-looking madonna astonishes nobody. In fact the idea long since became general that She was not American. So that is that. The other sculptors all admit him to be a sculptor. So do I -- in spite of his lack of a diploma. He is not as deep as Michael Angelo, it is true, nor so suggestive as Brancusi, but he knows how to do what he sets out to do. There is a touch of sameness in the work that invites the suspicion that Mr Epstein confines himself to the things he knows how to do. He doesn't clutch at the stars like Blake. He never fails gloriously but succeeds methodically. Such extraordinary ease in execution is in fact rather tiresome. The immense collection of bronzes he displays gives a suggestion of rankness as though it had grown up over night in some most tropical forest. But the American public unquestionably likes free-flowering geniuses. Sert, for instance. They like him.

* *Mother India*. By Katherine Mayo. Illustrated. 8vo. 423 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.75.

THE THEATRE

GILBERT SELDES

IF I were a strict moralist about the theatre, I might take it, or myself, to account, because the plays of the past month have given me exceptional pleasure, and yet I am critically certain that I have not encountered great passions or perfection of form. It is, I must assume, within the capacity of the theatre to give a certain satisfaction without being great.

Paul Sifton's play, *The Belt*, was presented by The New Playwrights' Theatre, the same organization which last year, rather self-consciously, put on *Loud Speaker* and some other experimental works in such a way that the lover of experiments in the theatre began to suspect that the Shuberts were probably right after all. *The Belt* is a better play than some of last season's offerings,

but not immeasurably better; the production is. It is, in fact, so good that it almost conceals the central fault of the play.

This fault is the author's allowing his interest to shift when the play was half finished. The first act deals with men and women enslaved by the vast processes of large-scale manufacture symbolized by the moving belt -- as it is used in the Ford factory and in the packing industry. We see the weary, spiritless faithful worker on the tenth anniversary of his serfdom, demoted from being a foreman because he has been unable to drive his team ahead in a competition with another factory; we see his wife, relishing the comparatively high wages, clinging to the slight dissipations of urban life, and being a little unfaithful to her husband because he is too tired and brighter men, with easier hours, retain a prowess she demands. We see a daughter, stenographer in the big plant; and her "boy-friend," a fiery youth who hates the process by which men are made adjuncts of machinery. Into a sharply drawn picture of dreary lives, satirical relief is introduced: the head of the factory, accompanied by an imported fiddler, heralded by secretaries, arrives, pins a medal on the lapel of the man whose very name he cannot remember, and brings hired dancers to restore the steps of long ago. When all are gone the girl and the boy stir their own passion by dancing to jazz and, broken and weary, fall asleep in each other's arms. In this "compromising" situation they are discovered by the father. Denial of guilt does not satisfy him; but the youth swings the dispute into a tirade against the belt, and suddenly, with the sounding of gongs and the rattle of cog-wheels, the belt comes into view towering above the little human beings, manned by sweating slaves, supremely powerful and deadly. With that something tremendous took place on the stage.

It could only have occurred if the emotions already invoked were profound, and they were. It could only have a sequel if the play of emotions continued, and they did not. From that moment the play went communist: the second act was argumentative, brought in the Ku Klux Klan to avenge the girl's honour, turned into a riot, and ended with the diversion of the crowd's desire to destroy -- the threatened seducer turns into a labour leader, announces, with the help of the girl, that the factory is going to be closed down, and leads the mob to destroy the belt. As usual in experimental plays, the destruction, in the third act, is introduced by some fancy jazz dancing, extremely effective while the merciless drag of the belt continues; the president of the factory makes a sentimental speech instead of a financial one, the belt is smashed, and the boy is arrested, reminding the men and women that when they are old they will still recall that once, at least, in their lives, they defied the belt and stood on their hind legs.

The play, in short, turned from a moving study of human beings into an attack upon a system of production; after the first act the

belt's effect on human lives was forgotten, and wages and rights and further abstractions, not realized, took their place. It was the first act that made me feel Mr Sifton's power; he has it, and some wit, and a gift for the theatre. After the first act, it was Mr Edward Massey who made the play interesting, who wove groups of people together, who singled out and emphasized the moments when individuals held their own against an idea. I am far from being impartial in Mr Massey's regard, so it pleases me to note that his direction was applauded by most of the critics. In the commercial theatre, one thing would be held against him. It was his idea to bring the belt on the scene at the end of the first act -- dramatically he was right. But since the rest of the play could not live up to it, he should have kept the belt for the end -- or persuaded Mr Sifton to re-write the play a little.

My programmes for this month's plays have all been lost, so I cannot name the names of some of the players; the two young people were extraordinarily good, playing with simplicity and a surcharge of emotion.

One other play of the month possessed, and created, emotion: *Coquette*, produced by Jed Harris, who produced Broadway, written by George Abbott, who collaborated on that piece, and by Ann Preston Bridger -- a new name. The star is Helen Hayes. For a long time Miss Hayes has used the stage as a platform from which her points of attractiveness could be admired by those who found them attractive; and suddenly, in this play, she acts, with passion and authority; all her tricks and mannerisms have been, as a fellow-critic remarked, subdued to the part. She is a credit to Mr Abbott who directed, and to herself.

The play has certain elements of goodness ; some are to be found in *Romeo and Juliet* and the rest in any melodrama of southern chivalry. These are the best parts of the play, and in indicating their sources I do not mean to belittle them in any way. The weakness of the play is in the meagre creation of character. The coquette is a congeries of characteristics; she is flirtatious, she wheedles, she gets around people, but there is nothing in her words or actions to make her distinctly a person. The roughneck with whom she falls in love is a little better -- he has a sort of violence which might pass for power; but he too is close to caricature. Almost all the other characters are stock; the exception is an adolescent, well conceived and well played.

This is a first play re-worked by an old hand. It has fine points, some freshness, and delicacy.

Two melodramas: deft, quiet imported goods in *Interference*; harsh, slick violence in *Nicutsticx*. The end of the second act of the latter is so good that the slow beginning and the

trick ending are not at all resented. *Interference* is more of a piece and has been directed in a languorous, easy-going manner which pleases me by drawing out the intensity of its suspense. It manages, oddly for melodrama, to create a character; with the slightest turn of interest the play could become a straight tragic-comedy built around the conception of a rotter who, having once experienced beauty, kills whatever threatens that beauty.

In *John*, Philip Barry demonstrates again the possession of a considerable talent which is either not for the theatre, or has not yet made terms with the theatre. This demonstration has gone on for some years, and once in a while Mr Barry seems to have learned something. The present play is built around the figure of John the Baptist ; toward the end of the first act John is expecting the people of the town to come to hear him preach; he learns that his young disciple, Jesus, is also preaching in the neighbourhood and sends some of his men down to meet the approaching crowd, so that a number of them may be diverted to the younger preacher. And he stands at the door of his tent, watching the multitude, and then, before his messengers have reached them, he sees the entire crowd turn to the place where Jesus is preaching.

This was excellently dramatic, it was beautifully conveyed, silently, to the audience. The rest of the play was swept away in words. Everything was analysed; but the simple things that might have been simply told, the suggestion of political intrigue in which Herod was involved, the background of Messianic hysteria, were smothered; and the crucial thing: that John was not sure of the mission of Jesus, and could only be sure when his own death came, was not used dramatically at all.

Mr Ben-Ami was superb. I am not a foregone admirer of his methods; he seems, at times, to sacrifice a character to his own urgent feeling that everything must be intense and emotional. In this case he seemed to have created on the stage the figure that was in the author's mind; he was hampered by endless speeches -- and he is not the actor to whom speech is essential, nor the one who manipulates English with the greatest ease. Yet he lifted himself over every obstacle, and I hope that he will not now return to the tents of Israel.

John was produced by The Actors' Theatre, under the direction of Mr Guthrie McClintic. When Mr McClintic took over the management of this body, after the unsuccessful opening of last season, and instantly produced *Saturpay's Cuitpren*, laurels were placed on his brow. They have withered. Neither in his choice of play nor in his direction did Mr McClintic display any special gift.

Another organization, The Garrick Players, began their season with *The Taming of the Shrew* in modern clothes. Basil Sydney played Petruchio and Mary Ellis, Katherina. Far better than *Hamlet*, the *Shrew* undergoes the fresh treatment. Especially I liked the introduction of vaudeville and burlesque technique in certain scenes. Merely to see a motor-car or an electric stove while listening to Shakespearean phrases is a small pleasure -- the pleasure one always feels in the presence of a discovered anachronism or incongruity. But to see Shakespeare adapted to our native stage is to recognize an identity -- which is a higher pleasure. His comedies are direct descendants of the Venetian commedia -- and so is our comedy. The current production let us see this, and made the *Screw* vastly entertaining. It seemed strange to me that the induction scene and the interruptions from the drunken guest counted for so little. In Gémier's production, seen here a few years ago, much was made of this, and it fitted perfectly.

It must have been a pleasure to Leslie Howard to find himself with a play which allowed him to act, which required of him, for success, something more than walking agreeably through a few salons and bedrooms. It is a pity that *Escape*, John Galsworthy's new play, should not be more interesting. It has nine scenes; to carry the plot, three or four would be enough. The others are added either to make a night's entertainment (in which case they fail) or to allow Mr Galsworthy to make another cross-section of contemporary British life. There are six scenes in which an escaping convict meets various people and is variously aided or persecuted by them; some of these are as thin and bloodless as anything Mr Galsworthy has written; only two have any real gait and drive. To one of the latter Miss Frieda Inescort contributes a hard and polished gem of acting; to all of them Mr Howard brings precision, sympathy, an engaging reality. But nine genre scenes are six too many.

Weather Clear -- Track Fast is a romance of the race track in which the hero neither rides nor wins his bet; it has some excellent wisecracks of this year's vintage and is pretty consistently amusing.



Mae West

An ungrateful city has allowed Miss Mae West's *Wicked Age* to disappear after a run of two or three weeks. If this is a rebuke to Miss West because her activities last year brought on the censorship, it may be justified ; I fear it is nothing of the sort. Clean and dull though her new play was, Miss West deserved better for a display of technical virtuosity which is -- in all seriousness -- unparalleled. I do not mean by this that Miss West is a great actress; I mean only that her technique, superbly developed, comes out of our most uncorrupted theatre -- the theatre of revue, burlesque, and vaudeville. It is slick, and sly. It is amazingly economical -- a look of the eye serving Miss West where the complete battery of close-up expressions are used by much more respected players. Miss West has little range -- a few gestures, a few intonations -- but she makes them serve. To me she was, in a wretchedly cast and vilely staged play, incredibly fascinating.

Her play -- she is also the author -- achieved a meaninglessness almost sublime. Two minutes before the curtain fell I was puzzled to see how on earth she could possibly end it -- and was baffled because she simply didn't end it at all, merely walked off the stage and let the curtain come down on a stage strewn with loose ends. The best scene, intellectually, was a burlesque in which a newly chosen Miss America writes testimonials; there were also scenes of colossal unintentional humour, and some so broadly absurd that they were obviously put on merely to see how far in silliness one could go. Miss West is neither a portent nor a promise; but I will not of my own accord ever miss a show in which she appears.

Too late for review: *Spellbound*, with Pauline Lord -- mingled interest and distaste; Reinhardt's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* -- Reinhardt and his talented companies, including Moissi; *The*

Doctor's Dilemma, by The Guild -- the best production of Shaw The Guild has done since Heartsreak House, Dudley Digges directing; *Funny Face* -- Gershwin score, in case you have forgotten *That Certain Feeling* the composer has remembered it; the prodigious Astaires dance and clown in it and Victor Moore is very funny. All these and whatever the gods provide, will be reviewed next month.

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

KENNETH BURKE

DO we, in the intelligence that Strawinsky looks from Bach to Handel, have reason to suppose "music" will do likewise? For one may argue as to whether Strawinsky sets the fashions; but beyond question he is barometrically sensitive to them, and thus anticipates a need which others in turn will be supplying. Meanwhile, there are frequent Bach numbers available to New York audiences, and among those which have already been presented we should mention in particular the all-Bach piano programme by Harold Samuel. This Bach is the secular Bach, and thus the one farthest removed perhaps from Handel. And while listening to these steady but tenuous sounds, as executed by one who is so expert at bringing out their melodic contrasts, we had occasion to ponder the situation of these modern composers who had come to restore Bach as a contemporary through encroaching upon his province.

Perhaps it was more than a renewed interest in polyphony which placed Bach in a position of major authority. It was also the fact that the moderns, like Bach, seem to have held as one of their strongest preoccupations the balancing of the licit and the lawless, the search for distinction in the direction of chaos. In Bach, this inclusion of a "subversive" element was always matched by some higher principle of order. We could cite, for instance, his many ways of fixing and emphasizing the character of his melodic lines until they were able to exist side by side as "individuals," thus waiving the claims of strict harmonic adaptation to each other. Each motive, that is, was made to stand out so strongly in its own right that the motives could, though played simultaneously, be heard in terms of the melodic independence of each, an otherwise "unlawful" chord progression being excused by the superior assertiveness of the motives themselves. It also seems that the melodic line of his solo pieces for violin or 'cello utilized in another way a similar "state of evanescence." The instrument at times is reciting a melody, and at other times is hastily interpolating notes which are to be felt rather as an accompaniment to that melody (an accompaniment which cannot occur simultaneously, as on the piano, but must generally either precede or follow the notes with which

it is integrally joined). Thus, certain notes serve in a dual capacity, and as melody or harmony, partake somewhat of the licences of both. Or again, the many inessential notes natural to a style of melody which, like Bach's, works up and down the scale by single or half degrees, afford opportunity for a substratum of cacophony which could be noticed as such only were the music to be halted at one of these points and the ear allowed to dwell upon it.

The point, however, is not essential to our burden -- it being made merely to elucidate what might be clearer to some without illustration: that in Bach a technical violation of consistency was technically matched by order. This was in contrast to the "impressionistic" development of music after Bach, where -- as gradual exhaustion of the field drove composers once more into the remoter areas of consistency -- the "lawless" was now made acceptable, not by a coexistent technical counteragent, but by the addition of an "ethical" element -- the inclusion of an "idea." New sounds were henceforth admitted for their representative value. Under this aesthetic, a chaotic element would be "justified" not by stifling it beneath some more authoritative principle of order, but by programme: thus, "this is agitation," or "this is a question," et cetera. In time, still further allowances of this sort were drawn upon -- notably the weird, the grotesque, and finally the humorous, and even the ironic, as in a recent piece by Rieti, who asks us to laugh at others for what are obviously his own preferences. (Thus it is no accident that Berlioz, with his prophetic imagination for the range of the instruments, should also have been so pronounced a musical literalist. The development of such sound-values as his relied throughout upon this ethical principle of naturalization.) By means of these non-technical adjustments, many new regions of sound have been opened and made acceptable -- but the work of art itself, the more thorough its exemplification of such tendencies, becomes unilateral, no longer for its appeal upon a purely formal accounting.

Whereupon the modern attempt to "retrench" upon the literary allowances without at the same time retrenching upon the extreme wealth of tonal freedom which such allowances had produced. And Bach, if only by a process of elimination, became the musician whose problem approximated their own. For since there must be some ordering principle in the work of art, if the impressionistic one is minimized the technical one again becomes prominent. For his own day, Bach seems to have strained the chaotic to its farthest naturalizable limits. But being Bach, and not post-Bach, he was under no historical compulsion to move on still further, into "what is left." It remains to be seen whether the further reaches, explored under impressionism, can survive when, under an aesthetic of "pure" music, the literary element has been renounced which enabled such discoveries: whether sounds useful to one mentality

can be made to serve another. The problem is being met most squarely and affirmatively by Hindemith, and sometimes by Krenek. While Stravinsky -- returning to our opening sentence -- would seem, for the time at least, to have chosen the other course, a deliberate denuding, a blunt "return to order," an attempt to produce something which, under the aegis of solidity, willingly sacrifices more obvious claims to distinction that may seem to militate against it. Surely, the author of the *Sacre* is the composer best able to demand our docility and our patience.

As one of the earliest concerts of importance, the Malkin Trio, assisted, played the new *Quintet in C-major* by Ernest Bloch. Before the performance, Mr Bloch appeared in person to give a talk on his new work, using for this purpose the inspirational vocabulary to which we have previously referred. Unfortunately, the composer was next proceeding to show us his themes and other such bare samples, but the audience became unequal to the mental strain of hearing them in this fashion, and Mr Bloch, whose general remarks had been greatly enjoyed, vanished at the first premonition of the inattentive buzz. Thus we are left only with the "something inside," the feeling in the breast (pointed at) trying to get out, the identity of subjective and objective, all being personality.

The first movement, he had told us, was an encompassed chaos, an agitation kept in hand by the author. The second, an andante mistico, was best conveyed by a ripple of the hand. But here, he explained, appear sudden nodes of insurgency, rebellious moments in which the music breaks from its orbit and which the composer signalized as "releases." And he leaves them: they are part of the record. Now cultivated, we lay in wait for the release: it came, a sudden flutter and mounting of tones, a *sauve-qui-peut* scrambling Gothically upward, an Icarian flight into Wagner. It was a good release -- and after it the less champing *miéstico* was resumed. Third movement: *allegro energico*; solace, resignation; "happiness if you will." Particularly towards the close, it seemed to have been written and played with great conviction. Mr Bloch, who never ventures far or for long beyond euphony, here avoids even that little, and the finish of the quintet is indeed a home-coming.

It was reassuring, after the *Quintet*, to hear Mengelberg's performance of Bloch's early *Symphony in C-sharp minor*. It confirms the feeling that a man of Bloch's temperament needs nothing short of an orchestra. The great variety of instruments in the *Symphony*, approached by Beethoven and Brahms as the outcome of grave preparation in less massive forms, as a kind of musical culmination, seems now not to aggravate, but to ease, a musician's difficulties. Chamber music, especially chamber music for strings, relies upon resources which are in many respects at their nadir,

whereas the full orchestra, with its even now but meagrely charted field of timbre counterpoint, gives opportunity for that sense of massing, of "colossal" climaxes, which are perhaps more accessible to our quantity-minded times than are the subtle qualitative climaxes, almost like breathings, in the works of Mozart. Thus, the C-minor symphony contains the vitality in which for the most part the quintet seemed lacking, while the peculiar lyric felicities, which we had in mind earlier when using the term "conviction," seemed more frequent.

The Bloch quintet had been preceded by the Tschaikowsky *Trio in A-minor, for piano, violin, and 'cello*. Tschaikowsky's melodies might be said to suffer from their very virtues, since they have a propriety within themselves, an independent adequacy, which makes them a bit uncongenial to any purpose other than their own clear enunciation. It is more natural to reiterate them than to develop them (though they were, in one variation, requisitioned to serve in a fugue); and thus the trio seems overburdened with a constant bandying about of each phrase from one instrument to another, and a too symmetrical equalizing of the phrases among themselves. Could his constant dittoing of antecedent with consequent be one of those "lies" which, we learn from Paul Morand, Strawinsky claims to have eradicated from his Oedipus? Or was Strawinsky referring to precisely the opposite factor, the lengths to which music often goes when attempting to avoid these obvious but natural balances?

May one include here, mention of Miss Angna Enters' recent Sunday evening performance at the Plymouth, though as acting it falls to the lot of Mr Seldes, and as colour and design, is the province of Mr McBride? Miss Enters' "compositions" or "inventions" in dancing (with the appealing slogan that she does not "interpret" music but employs it as "counterpoint" to her steps) are not aesthetic dances of the perspirational and gravitation-defying variety. They are realistic rather than conventional or allegorical, and they are a set of transitions between postures. These postures, particularly where they derive from primitive paintings, are assumed with an astonishing understanding of their "history" -- by which we mean not their period, but the modulatory processes by which Miss Enters arrives at them -- the "logic" which precedes and follows them. At their best, as in the Mother of Heaven, they are offered without apology. At other times, as in Feline acted to an accompaniment of Debussy, she calls to her assistance a slightly mitigating element of mockery. In the Moyen Age with its "hark ye" attitudes wherein the long stiff figure in red assumes a succession of admonitory postures, the gravity is archaic, and thus quaint, and thus offered as something not quite gravity. Miss Enters, in many guises, proffers a study in boredom -- a girl waiting for her lover, the two versions of *Piano Music* where the mind is obviously elsewhere, the *Entr'actes* elucidating

entr'acte sociability. She stoops occasionally to a rather blunt comicality, unnecessarily, as one feels, degrading her gracefulness for the sake of a few scattered snickers -- but this same quality, when subtler, as in the *Antique 4 la Frangaise* or the *Contredanse*, is more positive. This last number, a peasant dance executed with an artificial clumsiness which one hesitates to name as such, since the ease of her movements was so apparent and so fundamental, closed a series of "interpretations" which combined much psychology and much gracefulness. The range of her mimicry is perhaps not so wide, however, as the range of her titles would seem to indicate -- for it was the same ingénue, though on every occasion with an attitude carried over from the preceding impersonation, that answered each curtain call.

Note, from The Dial - February 1928

: In reviewing *Antheil and the Treatise on Harmony* by Ezra Pound, January 1928, page

74, the Editors wished to name Pascal Covici as American publisher.

=====

FEBRUARY

CANTO XXII

BY EZRA POUND

Copyright 1928 by Ezra Pound.

An' that man sweat blood to put through that railway,
And what he ever got out of it?

And he said one thing: "As it costs,

As in any indian war it costs the government

20,000 dollars per head

To kill off the red warriors, it might be more humane
And even cheaper, to educate."

And there was the other type, Warenhauser,

That beat him, and broke up his business,

A Tale of the American Curia, that gave him,
Warenhauser permission to build the Northwestern railway
And to take the timber he cut in the process;

So he cut a road through the forest,
Two miles wide, an' perfectly legal.
Who wuz agoin' to stop him!

And he came in and said: "'Can't do it,
Not at that price, we can't do it."

That was in the last war, here in England,
And he was making chunks for a turbine
In some sort of an army plane;

An' the inspector says: "How many rejects?"
"What you mean, rejects?"

And the inspector says: "'How many do you get?"
And Joe said: "We don't get any rejects, our. . .
And the inspector says: "Well then of course you can't do it.
Price of life in the occident.

And C.H. said to the renowned Mr Bukos:

"What is the cause of the H.C.L.?" and Mr Bukos,

The economist consulted of nations, said: "Lack of labour."
And there were two millions of men out of work.

And C.H. shut up, he said

He would save his breath to cool his own porridge,

But I didn't, and I went on plaguing Mr Bukos
Who said finally: "I am an orthodox
"Economist."

Jesu Christo!
Standu nel paradiso terrestre
Pensando come si fesse compagna d'Adamo!!

And Mr H.B. wrote in to the office:
I would like to accept C.H.'s book
But it would make my own seem so out of date.
Heaven will protect

The lay reader. The whole fortune of
MacNarpen and Company is founded
Upon Palgrave's Golden Treasury. Nel paradiso terrestre
And all the material was used up, Jesu Christo,
And everything in its place, and nothing left over
To make una compagna d'Adamo. Come si fesse?
E poi ha vishtu una volpe
And the tail of the volpe, the vixen,
Fine, spreading, and handsome, e pensava:
That will do for this business ;
And la volpe saw in his eye what was coming, e
Corre, volpe corre, Christu corre, volpecorre,
Christucorre, e dav' un saltu, ed ha preso la coda
Della volpe, and the volpe wrenched loose
And left the tail in his hand, e di questu
Fu fatta,

€ per questu
E la donna una furia,
Una fuRRia-e-una rabbia.

And a voice behind me in the street:
"Meestair Freer! Meestair .. ."
And I thought I was three thousand
Miles from the nearest connexion;
And he'd known me for three days, years before that,
And he said, one day a week later: Would you lak
To meet a wholly man, yais he is a verree wholley man.
So I met Mohamed Ben Abt el Hjameed,

And that evening he spent his whole time

Queering the shirt-seller's business,

And taking hot whiskey. The sailors

Come in there for two nights a week and fill up the café
And the rock scorpions cling to the edge

Until they can't jes' nacherly stand it

And then they go to the Calpe (Lyceo)

NO MEMBER OF THE MILITARY
OF WHATEVER RANK IS PER-
MITTED WITHIN THE WALLS OF
THIS CLUB

That fer the governor of Gibel Tara
"Jeen-jah! Jeen-jah!" squawked Mohamed,
"O-ah, geef heem sax-pence."
And a chap in a red fez came in, and grinned at Mohamed
Who spat across four metres of tables
At Mustafa. That was all there was
To that greeting; and three nights later
Ginger came back as a customer, and took it out of Mohamed.
He hadn't sold a damn shirt on the Tuesday.
And I met Yusuf and eight men in the calle,
So I sez: Wot is the matter,
And Yusuf said: Vairy foolish, it will
Be sefen an' seex for the summons;
Mohamed want to sue heem for libel.
To give all that to the court!

So I went off to Granada
And when I came back I saw Ginger, and I said:
What about it?

And he said: O-ah, I geef heem a

Seex-pence. Customs of the sha-ha-reef.
And they were all there in the lyceo,
Cab drivers, and chaps from tobacco shops,
And Edward the Seventh's guide, and they were all
For secession.

Dance halls being closed at two in the morning,
By the governor's order. And another day on the pier
Was a fat fellah from Rhode Island, a-sayin':
"Bi Hek! I been all thru Italy
An' ain't never been stuck!"

"But this place is plumb full er scoundrels."
And Yusuf said: Yais? an' the reech man
In youah countree, haowa they get their money;
They no go rob some poor pairsons?
And the fat fellah shut up, and went off.
And Yusuf said: Woat, he iss all thru Eetaly
An' ee is nevair been stuck, ee ees a liar.
W'en I goa to some forain's country
I am stuck.

W'en yeou goa to some forains country
You moss be stuck; w'en they come 'ere I steek thaim.
And we went down to the synagogue,
All full of silver lamps
And the top gallery stacked with old benches;
And in came the levite and six little choir kids

And began yowling the ritual
As if it was crammed full of jokes,
And they went through a whole book of it;
And in came the elders and the scribes
About five or six and the rabbi
And he sat down, and grinned, and pulled out his snuff-box,
And sniffed up a thumb-full, and grinned,
And called over a kid from the choir, and whispered,
And nodded toward one old buffer,
And the kid took him the snuff-box, and he grinned,
And bowed his head, and sniffed up a thumb-full,
And the kid took the box back to the rabbi,
And he grinned, e faceva bisbiglio,
And the kid toted off the box to another old bunch of whiskers,
And he sniffed up his thumb-full,
And so on till they'd each had his sniff;
And then the rabbi looked at the stranger, and they
All grinned half a yard wider, and the rabbi
Whispered for about two minutes longer,

An' the kid brought the box over to me,
And I grinned and sniffed up my thumb-full.
And then they got out the scrolls of the law
And had their little procession
And kissed the ends of the markers.
And there was a case on for rape and blackmail
Down at the court-house, behind the big patio full of wistaria;
An' the nigger in the red fez, Mustafa, on the boat later
An' I said to him: Yusuf, Yusuf's a damn good feller.
And he says:
"Yais, he ees a goot fello,
"But after all a chew
ees a chew."
And the judge says: That veil is too long.
And the girl takes off the veil
That she has stuck onto her hat with a pin,
"Not a veil," she says, "'at's a scarf."
And the judge says:
Don't you know you aren't allowed all those buttons?
And she says: Those ain't buttons, them's bobbles.
Can't you see there ain't any button-holes?
And the Judge says: Well, anyway, you're not allowed ermine.
"Ermine?" the girl says, "Not ermine, that ain't,
"°At's lattittzo."
And the judge says: And just what is a lattittzo?
And the girl says:
"It'z a animal."

Signori, you go and enforce it.

APPARITION IN EARLY AUTUMN

BY ROBERT HILLYER

MARCEL walked slowly homeward, driving his geese before him. The great beech-trees which lined the way like the aisle of a forest, were already beginning to turn gold. He enjoyed loitering through the September dusk. The smell of wood-smoke was pleasant and the slight chill made his clothes, which all summer had clung to him damply, seem very comfortable. And some time, he thought, a miracle might befall him. Was it not always to young people that the Blessed Virgin Mary had appeared, and the saints who in grottoes or glades of the forest suddenly gladden the eyes of the believer? What better place than this lonely road, what better lad than he, to entertain a shining visitant ?

The geese were restive this evening. It was always so in early autumn when their kin were flying south. A call from the high air set them craning their necks upward, honking, and beating their wings. And how they would hiss at him when he waved his arms and mimicked their strain toward the sky! He must clip them to-morrow ; the big gander had flown over the barn; he would be off for the south if he had the smallest chance. Marcel was always clipping them to-morrow. It was amazing how time on its casters of dream rolled so quickly and silently away. When had the green ebbed out of the beeches? When had the leaves turned yellow? Already they held the pale light of sunset after the first star had risen. Soon they would be flakes of silver, hissing drily in the winter wind. Yet he had never caught them at their change. It seemed to him that everything was done behind his back, and of a sudden the season had changed, or people were saying to him, "You are quite a man now." Indeed time slips away, but even so one has to wait a long while for a miracle.

Marcel lifted his eyes and watched the geese waddling along unhappily on their webbed feet. He looked beyond them, and under one of the beeches saw a glimmering form taking shape.

There was no footfall among the leaves on the ground; the figure had not been there a moment ago. The more he looked at it the clearer it became, and, so it seemed to him, taller and slenderer. His heart pounded. He stopped in his tracks. Certainly this was his miracle -- but immediately he wished it had not come so soon. He was not prepared for it; he was afraid. Was it an angel? Was it a saint? Suppose it should be the Blessed Virgin herself and he should not recognize her? In all his day-dreams of the miracle, that possibility had never occurred to him. Yet he should have

foreseen it, for something quite as embarrassing had already happened to him. Once a man in dirty corduroy had stopped him in the road and asked directions, and Marcel, because of the man's poor clothes, had talked to him quite naturally. Then in a minute his mother had run out, curtsying and puffing, and bleating, "Yes, Sir! If you please, Sir. Oh I'm glad to be of service, Sir." All the time the shabby traveller had been the rich man from the big house on the hill. Now Marcel was hoping that his apparition would not be the Blessed Virgin. And perhaps life without miracles was really preferable. There would be fewer chances of making some frightful mistake.

Then suddenly the figure came toward him, and if it wasn't only Mary, the cobbler's daughter, in a clean linen frock and a chain of coral beads.

"What's the matter, Marcel? Did you think I was a ghost?"

She came up to him and looked at him very hard out of her dark eyes. Even plain Mary, whom he had known all his life, looked strange this evening. Marcel, without answering, decided with some disappointment that a miracle would have been better after all. He had an obscure feeling that he had spoiled his chances of seeing a miracle by being afraid.

Mary put her hand on his shoulder. 'What is it, Marcel?' she said in a strained, breathless voice, as if she were planting her words between heart-beats. "Did I scare you? did you think I was a ghost?" The arm on his shoulder tightened as if she were going to hug him. "I wouldn't frighten little Marcel...No, but big Marcel! He's almost a man, now."

Marcel drew away a little and shuffled his feet uneasily in the dust.

"I thought you were an angel," he said.

The words sounded so foolish he hardly dared look at her for fear she would be laughing at him. Instead, she flung her arm off his shoulder, clenched her fists, and regarded him angrily.

"An angel! an angel!" Her voice was fierce and bitter. "Are angels all you're looking for at your age! You, almost a grown man now, looking for angels! I'd be ashamed of myself! Almost a grown man and looking for angels!" She laughed abruptly. "Any one might as well be an angel in this village, the nearest thing to a man being yourself. O my God!"

"I must drive my geese along," Marcel answered primly, and rather puzzled.

He started after the white procession, making a clucking sound to gather in the stragglers.

"Marcel!" Mary had seized his arm now, and swung him round in her vehemence. "Marcel!"

He noticed how pale she was and how her hair clung in damp ringlets over her eyes. She looked so silly. But he felt too ill at ease to laugh at her. Besides, he was almost afraid that she would hit him.

"What is it?" he asked sullenly.

Then she leaned over him, sighing, and kissed him on the mouth. She took him in both her arms, pulled him toward her; but he took no step forward, and, losing their balance, they reeled apart, half falling against a tree. She laughed queerly. "Don't you like being kissed, Marcel? Don't you like me? Are you afraid of me?" She grabbed at him and he ducked.

This was better. It was only one of Mary's foolish tricks after all. She was always inventing some new game, and you never could tell when she was just in fun.

"Ho! scared of you! I think not."

Marcel lunged at her in his turn, made as if to kiss her, then with a great laugh smacked his lips together.

"Well, well; it's time to be going along now. I have my geese to look after, you know."

The joke had been fairly capped and there was no need of prolonging it. Anyway, Mary's pranks were never very amusing except to herself. Calling "Good-night" over his shoulder, he went on.

As he turned into his own lane, he was shocked to hear Mary shouting after him. He knew she was only pretending, but sup- someone should hear? Her language was horrid and any one would think to hear her that she was really in a temper.

"Be careful of your geese, little swine. Don't let the angels frighten you! Don't run off with the little boy, goosie gander! Little swine, little angel . . ."

Of course Marcel knew that she was laughing at her own silly joke, but anyone hearing her would think that she were sobbing and that he had been bullying her. She was a fool! He was

quite angry with her now, and very lonely.

The geese hurried before him toward the sedges which grew along the little stream. They were home now, he and his geese, and he did not care how chill the autumn night became. They were all home, so safe, so comfortable. He remembered his thought of miracles with distaste.

Far aloft from an unseen flier, fell a soft honking, a call to the south. The big gander stopped, rose up on his webbed feet. He gurgled strangely as if the sound travelled up and down his long neck. He flapped his wings furiously; he was up in the air. He was off! One by one, like white petals fluttering upward on a breeze, the rest of the geese, timorously at first but with each beat of their wings more confidently, followed him into the high night on their way to the south. In a moment they had disappeared. Marcel, watching them, made no effort to stay their flight. He watched them and thought that all this must be a dream.

DUBLIN ROADS

BY PADRAIC COLUM

When you were a lad that lacked a trade,
Oh, many's the thing you'd see on the way
From Kill-o'-the-Grange to Ballybrack,
And from Cabinteely down into Bray,
When you walked these roads the whole of a day.

High walls there would be to the left and right,
With ivies growing across the top,
And a briary ditch on the other side,
And a place where a quiet goat might crop,
And a wayside bench where a man could stop.

A hen that had found a thing in her sleep,
One would think, the way she went craw-craw-cree,

You would hear as you sat on the bench was there,
And a cock that thought he crew mightily,

And all the stir of the world would be

A cart that went creaking along the road,

And another cart that kept coming a-near;

A man breaking stones; for bits of the day

One stroke and another would come to you clear,
And then no more from that stone-breaker.

With head bent to the stone, or lifted up

To watch the sky, he sat there alone,

A cobbler that didn't mend, but broke;

The dazzlés would come from his heap of stone,
When, after the rain, the sun it shone.

And you'd leave him there, the stone-breaker,

And you'd wonder who came to see what was done
By him in a day, or a month, or a week:

He broke a stone and another one,

And you left him there, and you travelled on.

A quiet road! You would get to know
The briars and stones along by the way;

A dozen times you'd see last year's nest;
A peacock's cry, a pigeon astray
Would be marks enough to put on a day;

Or the basket-carriers you would meet:
A man and a woman -- they were a pair!
The woman going beside his heel ;
A straight-walking man with a streak of him bare,
And eyes that could give you a crafty stare.

Coming down from the hills they'd have ferns to sell,
Going up from the strand, they'd have cockles in stock;
Sand in their baskets from the sea,

Or clay that was stripped from a hillside rock --

A pair that had often stood in the dock!

Or a man that played on a tin-whistle:

He looked as he'd taken a scarecrow's rig;
Playing and playing as though his mind
Could do nothing else but go to a jig,
And no one around him, little or big.

And you'd meet no man else until you came
Where you could look down upon the sedge,
And watch the Dargle water flow,

And men smoke pipes on the bridge's ledge,
While a robin sang by the haws in a hedge.

Or no bird sang, and the bird-catchers

Would have talk enough for a battle gained,

When they came from the field and stood by the bridge,
Taking shelter beside it while it rained,

While the bird new-caught huddled and strained.

Then men would come by with a rick of hay
Piled on a cart; with them you would be
Walking beside the piled-up load:

It would seem as it left the horses free,

They would go with such stride and so heartily.

And so you'd go back along the road.

NEW POEMS BY PADRAIC COLUM

Poems. By Padraic Colum. 16mo. 36 pages. Ralph Fletcher Seymour. \$1.

Creatures. By Padraic Colum. With Drawings by Boris Artzybasheff. 8vo. \$8 pages. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

BY JOHN EGLINTON

COMMEND me to Mr Colum among the Irish poets! He has the eye for externals, which do not with him lose their outline in a crepuscular reverie, blending a ghoulish dream-world with the archetypal actualities of nature, until we know not whether we be looking at moods or mountains! His is the mind, not of the mythologist, but of the folk-lorist; and if we were disposed to look for an explanation of this we might find it, I think, in his Catholic piety. His faith I am far from sharing; but I can recognize that it has kept his mind open to the actualities of life and nature in Ireland, an objectivity which has not been characteristic of Ireland's Protestant poets, with Mr Yeats at their head: for it is the Protestants who have filled Irish literature with an ambiguous twilight, peopled with phantom divinities and shadowy beings, which every Catholic knows perfectly well were driven once for all from the green fields of Erin before the uplifted crozier of St Patrick. Irish Catholicism has in fact always looked askance at the wonder world of Celtic mythology. In the early days of the Irish Literary Movement the evocation of the Gael's pre-Christian past had almost amounted to a threat to the organized religion of the country; the situation was saved, however, by the firm religiosity of the Catholic population, much as in Russia the anti-capitalistic Revolution was stayed by the self-interested conservatism of the peasant.

I can see this connexion then between the two very dissimilar books of verse considered here*: that Mr Colum's fixed Roman faith has left his vision clear for the things of life and nature. But being "rather Ingersollian myself" -- to borrow a phrase from one of R. L. Stevenson's characters -- it can hardly be expected of me that I should enter into the mood of verse which is not merely religious but devotional. Generally speaking, indeed, I have to confess to an imperfect feeling for what is called "religious poetry"; nor can I feel that the kneeling attitude is an attitude natural to the poet, who must stand on his feet,

"An equal amongst mightiest energies,"

even when he is minded to chant a hymn to his Maker. It was an attitude to which, in that pause of history between the ancient

and the modern world, the spirit of man consented; but I think that for any hymn equal to the heart-moving rhythms of the Early Christian Church we must now look to men whose knees have forgotten how to kneel, to the Protestants and devout agnostics of world-literature.

In the other volume, *Creatures*, Mr Colum has had the idea of bringing together those of his poems which relate to the life of animals, including some poems which are new to me. The animals are not for the most part those which from time to time, in our daily walks at home, we gaze on contemplatively, but creatures of which the traveller brings home tales, macaws, monkeys, the bison, the humming-bird, the bird of Paradise; though when he meets with crows, plover, asses, a fox, he seems glad to have fallen in with compatriots.

The mind that would enter into the life of animals must be an innocent mind; it must be at a pause of all the egoistic impulses that urge the human mind in search of its sustenance and of the satisfaction of its desires; it must achieve moments in which, itself like an animal, it lies fixed in effortless contemplation; a stony calm transmutable into a measureless alertness; a protoplasmic transparency generative of wings! The love of animals has not been enjoined by ethical teachers, springing as it does from affinities within us, original like sin; yet if I should hear of a man that he was pre-eminently concerned with the weal of his neighbours, I would not have the same expectations of him as I should have were I told, for example, that he was fond of tigers. Such a man could not fail to be endowed by nature with some real and lucid disinterestedness of soul. There must be recesses of wistful sympathy in such a man which would make him worth winning for a friend. The two sentiments which enter into our feeling for animals, admiration and pity -- admiration for the ruthless efficiency exhibited by them within their limitations, and pity for their imprisonment within these limitations -- are also perhaps the specifically human instincts, and in the exercise of them we are least likely to forget that we are animals ourselves: animals who have lost contact with nature, saving so far as we can recapture lost affinities through the exercise of a comprehensive, all-atoning human faculty which we name Imagination.

Mr Colum then is admirable both as a poet and as a human being when he catches sight of a young fox led on leash along the street, and

"fain would cover up
His bowels of dread, and find some way to bring
The rainy hills around him, the soft grass,
Darkness of ragged hedges, and his earth --
The black, damp earth under the roots of trees!"

or when, on his way perhaps to discharge some social obligation,
he would become an otter,

"A mate beside me; we will venture down
A deep, full river when the sky above
Is shut of the sun; spoilers are we;
Thick-coated ; no dog's tooth can bite at our veins: --
With ears and eyes of poachers; deep-earthed ones
Turned hunters: let him slip past,
The little vole, my teeth are on an edge
For the King-fish of the river!
I hold him up --
The glittering salmon that smells of the sea!"

These poems lend themselves to quotation, however, and I must restrain myself. But before parting with Mr Colum I should like to remark upon the steady progress which he makes in the art of verse; and I hope he will refrain from collecting all his poetic work until he has carried still farther his new power of imparting a fulness of thought and imagination to his language and rhythm.

He is not, I think, much helped by his illustrator in this volume. Decorative art can hardly be intimate, and it is intimacy we require in that art which would interpret or illuminate for us the life of animals: vignettes deep-sunk in the page like those of Bewick, for example. But even as decoration the too blatant black and white of these designs is not, to my mind, happily married to the text.



Hart Crane

THE AIR PLANT

BY HART CRANE
Grand Cayman

This tuft that thrives on saline nothingness,
Inverted octopus with heavenward arms
Thrust parching from a palm-bole hard by the cove --
A bird almost -- of almost bird alarms,

Is pulmonary to the wind that jars
Its tentacles, horrific in their lurch.

The lizard's throat, held bloated for a fly,
Balloons but warily from this throbbing perch.

The needles and hacksaws of cactus bleed
A milk of earth when stricken off the stalk;
But this -- defenceless, thornless, sheds no blood,
Almost no shadow -- but the air's thin talk.

Angelic Dynamo! Ventriloquist of the Blue!
While beachward creeps the shark-swept Spanish Main
By what conjunctions do the winds appoint
Its apotheosis, at last -- the hurricane!

FROM THE AIR
Book Review
by CUTHBERT WRIGHT

Since Victor Hugo: French Literature of To-day.
By Bernard Fay. Translated from the French by
Paul R. Doolin. 178 pages. Little, Brown
and Company. \$2.

ALL panoramas are disappointing from the clouds. France itself
from the window of the Bourget-Croydon Line is only a
checkerboard of ploughed vermilions and childish greens; and we

might as well say without reserve that we are disappointed in M Fay's panorama, particularly since our disappointment contains a perfectly unsubtle homage to everything we know of M Fay. We should prefer him as an intimate guide rather than as the pilot of an airship. M Fay seems to have yielded to the temptation to extract from these books, these figures which he tastes and gauges, which he respects and loves, the fine gold essence in order to fashion it into small ornaments, each stamped with his own signature. But that is the privilege of any critic, one may object. It is his business to interpret his subjects, to the best of his ability and good faith of course, but as loftily or as epigrammatically as he chooses. It is his duty to arrest and amuse...Yes, but not to so personal a degree that the subjects themselves are only half revealed to the reader. Fay must not be so quintessentially Fay that we fail to apprehend Rimbaud. The oasis, however genial its lights and shades, must not conceal too impenetrably the horizon or the vital desert.

One's disappointment in this book may partly be laid to the translation which in general does rather less than justice to the original, and is in places atrocious. After a fine and poignant chapter on Arthur Rimbaud, M Fay and his translator together settle down to a murderous dissection of "poor Lélian" whose vagrom ghost must feel even poorer after sensing this estimate: "This ragamuffin in love with everything, this tramp who never rested, this inspired and miserable poet, who had pushed all things too far, and preserved of grandeur only his refusal to settle down, and an unquenchable thirst for alcohol, women and the mystical life, this happy and crafty maniac . . . was bound to fascinate the youth."

"He does all things in love," once said to me an inveterate Hollander, incapable of learning English. He was not speaking of Verlaine, as it happened, but his prose was as incorrigibly Batavian as that of M Fay's translator. Two mysterious neologisms, one absolute mis-statement, and all ending up, like the "smash" in an American short story, as the expression "the youth" - jeunesse? -- what a sentence!

Next we return to prose and come by natural force of contrast to "the master of official French literature," the late M Anatole France. Here the characterization descends from its normal height of mysterious aphorism and becomes singularly direct, bitter, just. M Fay tells the truth about him as no doubt it has never yet been told in English, thanks to the fact that for some reason Anatole France struck a resounding chord in the bosoms of school-teachers, publishers, women of wealth, movie magnates, stock-brokers, socialist orators, Burton Rascoe, in short all our thinking classes. Apparently it was the same for this prophet in his own country. The vulgarity of the sage can be measured by his ex-

treme popularity with the obviously wrong people. Yet his style passed for ultimate perfection; his ideas were regarded as the last word in penetration and balance. This supposed omniscience did not prevent him from ignoring Rimbaud, the greatest single force in French poetry, nor from sniffing delightedly all along the wall the pale odours of poetasters like Coppée and Sully-Prudhomme. In a word, his instincts and appreciations were those of the mob, and richly and not for nothing did the democracy reward him. He had a great funeral. People loved that decaying corpse which had lately so tickled the undecorative animal sleeping in each of us. Understand this, and you will see how exquisite are these few lines of Fay's which lay the last metallic wreath upon that honourless tomb: "By the baseness of his imagination, the frankness of his ignorance, the elegance of his emptiness, he has placed himself close to us all...His success is due especially to what he did not say, did not do, did not desire."

Not a word too much, nor too harsh. Requiescat.

Coming at last to our immediate time, we feel that M Fay overestimates the creative importance of certain authors of the *Revue Française*, even at the expense of others of the same household. To speak of Schlumberger and almost fail to mention Duhamel, to mention Cocteau, the writer, with respect and to ignore Salmon, seems to us an aberration. The chapter on the ambiguous pontiff of the same literary "trust" is inspired by the natural interest everyone feels for André Gide, though not all of us share M Fay's veneration. If Gide is everything that is claimed for him -- cerebral, stimulating, coldly voluptuous, dragging up shivering monsters of conduct in his long Protestant net -- almost the same could be said for Madame Colette. Corneille once affirmed with great energy that a woman was naturally unable to produce a truly creative work. "Ils leur manque quelque chose," he added. We are not either so dogmatic or so malicious as to say that this is evidently the case of M Gide; none the less "Ils jui manque quelque chose" seems to us a discreet and legitimate criticism.

And if "something still is lacking" in the case of this brilliant and sincere book, it remains very difficult to suggest how it could have been done better. Manuals of French literature in all periods seem to have been divided between brilliant generalizers like Strachey and M Fay, and the dreary cohort of mandarins who, working in the Lanson-Michaud tradition, compile text-books for our academies of mislearning. Is there room for another class of book, more trenchant, more loving, more just, and more personal, all at once? Let us continue to hope so.

=====
THEATRE, SHOW-SHOP, AND DRAMA

A History of the American Drama. From the Civil War to the Present Day. By Arthur Hobson Quinn. Two volumes. 8mo. 655 pages. Illustrated. Harper and Brothers. \$10.

GILBERT SELDES

One goes through Professor Quinn's excellently documented volumes, reading synopses of play after play about Northern spies in Virginia, about women (ladies, then) compromised by visits to men's rooms, about divorce, with the certainty that something beside their stilted manner has staled them: a much more artificial manner has preserved Congreve even when his subjects are more remote. One fancies that Mr Augustus Thomas and Mr Langdon Mitchell and a hundred other playwrights whom the author over-estimates, had accepted as subject, not the actuality of their contemporaries' feelings about honour and divorce, but the conventions about these things; one knows that to-day a play about divorce would be concerned not with social opprobrium, but with the tangled emotions of the divorcers. I suppose that is why so many of our plays now deal with the struggle between the older and the younger generation, the older figuring vaguely as the social order, the "thing against which" ; it is possible that that is also why most of these plays seem a little unreal to me -- the dramatists themselves disbelieving in the conflict they attempt to create. At the end of Professor Quinn's history there rises, most sympathetically treated, the figure of an American dramatist who says:

"I'm always acutely conscious of the Force behind . . . and of the one eternal tragedy of Man in his glorious, self-destructive struggle to make the Force express him instead of being, as an animal is, an infinitesimal incident in its expression. And my profound conviction is that this is the only subject worth writing about...Of course this is very much of a dream, but where the theatre is concerned, one must have a dream, and the Greek dream in tragedy is the noblest ever." (A private letter to Mr Quinn from Eugene O'Neill.)

The exceptional position of Mr O'Neill in our theatre is due to the conviction he records above; his successes have their source there, and his failures come when he over-reaches himself, when his conceptions, ranging from grand to grandiose, are inadequately expressed (pace, the Behaviorists a moment) or when he gets tangled in the American drama of particulars to which he is, essentially, opposed. The best that American drama has done has been to tackle a "big theme."

Mr O'Neill, in his work and in his self-criticism, suggests the obvious thing: that the drama of *Man and Destiny* is as potent as ever, that it can be re-stated in modern terms. For this re-statement, the new arts of the theatre are invaluable, and for knowing what these arts are, Mrs Isaacs' book is invaluable. Here, succinctly and with only an occasional overflow into sentiment, are the technical bases of the modern theatre: a summary of the theory and practice of the last two decades in lighting, setting, costume, structure of the theatre building and its stage, directing, producing in all its aspects.

As you look over these interesting years in the theatre, you are aware of several things, one pre-eminently: that the new beauty of the arts of the stage has been forced upon the commercial theatre by amateurs, iconoclasts, theorists, artists, little contemptibles, stones rejected by the builders of properties around Longacre Square. (The circumstance should teach humility to conservatives and give courage to radicals; also a little grace to the latter, for their struggle has been neither too long nor too arduous, and some of them have gone over to the other side.) There follows another point of interest. O'Neill is the dramatist associated with the new movement: through the Provincetown group, through Jones, and now through the Theatre Guild; but, omitting him, has the new theatre created new dramatists? The still unproved expressionists have sources abroad, but they would not have come into being without the labours of the Washington Square Players and other little groups; that is true. But while the freshness of the theatre arts has invaded the commercial theatre, the American playwright has, for the most part, held off. He is still writing moderately well-made plays about more or less imaginary conflicts. And, third point, the new theatre has hardly developed a new art of acting. The actor, to whom Mr Jones dedicated his book of designs, is improving in skill; a few conventions notably inappropriate to the new lights and settings, have been discarded; but the actor has not been worked upon, no new mask has been created in our theatre. The directors have been otherwise engaged.

A few of the essays in *Theatre* suggest the reason. The sceptre in the theatre has passed through many hands: dramatist, actor, designer, director each has held it, and abused it. The new development of the arts of the theatre came after the flagrant abuses of the actor-manager had become intolerable; the actor was ordered down. He needs redevelopment and M André Levinson's essays on the dance and Mr Kreymborg's and Mr Uraneff's essays on Puppets and on vaudeville suggest the sources. In Jean Cocteau's *Roméo et Juliette* a play was produced under the influence of the modern ballet, the production affecting every element in the play from text to the tonality of the players' voices; in *Processional* a play was produced under the influence of American burlesque, without the same unity, but with considerable effectiveness. These

isolated instances suggest that the playwrights, at least, are looking for new sources in the show-shop of our own theatre.

It does not seem to me that either of these two books is sufficiently aware of the show-shop: our commercial theatre with its outstanding technical virtuosity, our vaudeville, musical shows, and burlesque where a technique is constantly in development. I am not riding a hobby to death; when I worked on the seven lively arts I was interested in them purely for themselves and remain so; but I am aware of a life in them which can do many things for both the theatre and the drama. The second needs to be made more fruitful, the first more native and less arty. It is not enough to say, generously, that burlesque is good theatre, and I fear that the virThe of vaudeville will be a little dissipated if we go on for ever calling it *commedia dell'arte*. Mr Uraneft's parallels between our cheap theatre and the Venetian comedy are accurate enough; but there is something else in vaudeville and burlesque which the art theatre ought to study. For this is a theatre of actors and of masks, of players and of characters, in a sense almost unknown in the serious theatre.

There are times when, remembering that the great Hellenic tragedies came down to us with hardly the name of an actor noted, one wonders whether something drastic must not be done to the actor before the theatre can return to its former glory, or create anew one. In the movies I am convinced that the day of the star is done, that movie-players will supplant movie-actors; and if the same thing can be done on the stage, intimacy with the popular theatre is the simplest way of bringing it about.

BRIEFER MENTION

Love tn Cuartres, by Nathan Asch (12mo, 240 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$2.50). There are times when Mr Asch is very young and lean and hard, speaking with the staccato accents of Ernest Hemingway. There are other times when he is very old and pale and soft, falling into the blurred rhythms of Sherwood Anderson. This is not to affirm that he is wanting in originality; his art merely appears to be still in a formative state. He clearly is driving toward a notable maturity, the possi)ility of which is indicated in this novel by many passages of richness and insight.

Batiaps For Sale, by Amy Lowell (16mo, 311 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$2.25) is a third posthumous volume, wide in its range of mood and subject, and in workmanship so uneven that it is permissible to question whether the author, had there been opportunity, might not have made extensive revisions. There are in the collection a few of her finest poems and others only less distinguished; but with them a padding of metrical

book-reviews, letters in rhyme, travel sketches, and other occasional pieces -- the chief value of which is to reveal, in a new light, the personality of a woman who, for twenty years, was almost our only poète de carrière.

The poems collected in *Copper Sun*, by Countee Cullen (12mo, 89 pages; Harpers: \$2) are of the same range and tenor as those of the author's previous volume, *Color*. The reader has the impression, in fact, that the present work marks neither an advance nor a retrogression. If it is, like *Color*, more than ordinary, it is also considerably less than unique. Perhaps Mr Cullen's evident promise would have a more indubitable fulfilment were he less trustful of his facility.

New York Is Not America, by Ford Madox Ford (12mo, 291 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$2.50) is "a mirror to the States," but it is not as good as the same author's *Mirror to France*. It backs and fills: in New York one never meets people born in New York -- one meets them in Paris; and a moment later, an apology for this statement and an account of meeting a dozen New Yorkers who owned the very ground they were born on. So it is with a number of other things, and the method, highly allusive, discursive, pleasant, makes hard reading in the end. One hopes that future volumes in the Avignon Edition will have a few more blank leaves at the end than this book has.

In *The Art of Theatre-Going* (10mo, 217 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$3) John Drinkwater discusses certain problems of the theatre, using as illustrative material some English plays familiar to Americans and some not; he discusses also the cinema and by a simple test disposes of it as serious art, conceding however the integrity of Douglas Fairbanks who goes to great lengths to keep physically fit and of Charles Chaplin who works very hard in preparation for his scenes. There are more intelligent things than these in the book; but Mr Drinkwater lacks the vigour necessary to make them interesting.

The Autobiography of An Ex-Colored Man, by James Weldon Johnson (8vo, 211 pages; Knopf: \$3) published anonymously in 1912, amply justifies the distinction with which it is clothed in the present re-issue. In its pages one finds most of the ore which has -- in the ensuing decade and a half -- been wrought into the growing structure of negro art and achievement; it is a fascinating story and a tempered study of a great problem. *God's Trombones*, by the same author (8vo, 56 pages; Viking Press: \$2.50) is one of the achievements foreshadowed in the autobiography -- a collection of negro sermons in verse, giving literary form to the emotional exhortations of the old-time preacher. They are marked by a childlike fervour and intensity.

=====

THE THEATRE
GILBERT SELDES

I CANNOT help thinking that the most significant event in the theatre this month is not an opening, but a closing: the end of the comparatively brief run of *The Letter*, in which Katharine Cornell is the star. The Letter was not so bad a play as I had been told; it is trashy and it fails to work its melodramatic content for all it is worth, but the reason for its failure lies in the little remnant of integrity which Mr Maugham held on to when he refused to compound a crime by being sentimental about it. He allows the adulterous wife who has killed her lover to say, at the very end, "With all my heart I loved the man I killed," and the audience hates it.

About Miss Cornell it was truly said that her performance adds nothing to her repute; it was a satisfaction to see that she remained for the most part unsullied by the tawdriness of her play. In the first act she has to give a long explanation of why she has killed a man -- the explanation is a lie, for she pretends that the man was almost a stranger to her, and claims that she killed him in defence of her chastity. And with only the slightest aid from the text Miss Cornell charged this recital with such emotion that it became not a lie, but a truthful history of her love for the man, a bravura piece of the highest technical quality.

So, on the whole, one fancies no harm has been done. But Miss Cornell now goes on the road with a flashy and trivial play, driven away from everything interesting and fruitful in the theatre; add this year to the years in *The Green Hart* and under Belasco and the total is impressive. For almost as many years as she has been recognizably the finest of the young actresses in our theatre (and the word young is merely a habit, a superfluity, for Miss Cornell's youth is not nearly so important as her genius) she has been appearing in bad plays. Some of them were meretricious and dishonest; the present one is not even the best of its insignificant kind. I have no feeling that Miss Cornell ought to appear in the sombre drama, unless she wants to; I would give anything to see her test her range in light comedy where she would be compelled to hold high rein on her superb intensity. I wish only that she could disentangle herself from whatever commitments now cast her in bad plays which aren't, as in the present instance, even commercially important.

Of the only interesting aspect of *Spellbound*, Mr Krutch wrote in The Nation:

"So extraordinarily vivid is the personality of Miss Pauline Lord that she renders it almost impossible to judge as a play any piece in which she happens to be appearing. She has created a character which has an independent existence apart from any of the roles which she is called upon to play; that character is one

which is quite evidently an expression of her temperament; and she transfers it almost intact from play to play. She does not so much interpret as live, upon the stage at least, the character of a certain specific tragically bewildered woman, and though she speaks the lines which the dramatist has assigned to her she seems to be enacting in an almost somnambulistic state some episode in a dream-life of her own."

This is true and constitutes a condemnation of Miss Lord from which she must soon appeal. In *Spellbound*, you ticked off on your fingers the reminiscences of all the plays in which she appeared: *Anna Christie* was there and *Launzi* and *They Knew What They Wanted*; and here and there a reference not only to her past, but to the pasts of Miss Barrymore and Miss Lurette Taylor. I think one reason was the feebleness of the character-drawing in the part she was asked to portray, for in spite of the underlying temperamental identity, Miss Lord has been able to make her other parts distinct, to avoid a mannerism in one, to exploit it in another. She has, perhaps unfortunately for her artistic progress, created a character for which dramatists now are writing parts; her salvation would be to be cast in an old play for which she would necessarily go through the creative process again.

I noted last month that *The Doctor's Dilemma* was the most satisfactory production of Shaw the Guild has made since *Heart-Break House* and also that Mr Dudley Digges directed it; if this is coincidence, let the Guild make the best of it. It was Shaw played for everything he had -- the wit and the intelligence and the drama and the farce and the emotion; it showed up his faults without attempting to make capital of them. The playing was extremely good and, what interested me exceptionally, was at a level of goodness, the principals and the minor characters preserving some unity, as of people living together. Mr Lunt, perforce, drew out of this unity in his final scene -- I do not know how he could have helped it -- and emphasized certain moments which I had not always thought important; although he was not the genius-scoundrel I had always imagined, I accepted his creation because it was thorough, thought out, and complete.

Mr Lunt, Miss Hayes in *Coquette*, Miss Cornell in *The Letter*, and a number of other players have been permitted this season to sit in such relation to the footlights, and with such imperfect lighting from above, that shadows have distorted or obscured their faces precisely at moments when they should have been most clear. During a long period of Mr Lunt's presence on the stage I looked down his throat. Where do directors sit when they are directing?

Briefly: In *Mannattan Mary*, Ed Wynn is less ingenious, and more zany than ever, disarmingly attractive, always funny; he is becoming more and more the *Pantalone*, and it is his own creation, unmatched by any one else. Lou Holtz is also funny in this piece and its one good song, *It Won't be Long Now*, is murdered by an orchestration suggesting dish-pans and a tempo inappropriate to the words and music. Some of the dances are extremely interesting. *The Racket* is one of the best of the season's melodramas -- and it is a season rich in them. The language, the movement, are interesting; John Cromwell and Edward G. Robinson play skillfully; the director, unnamed, has done a good job; the producer, Alexander McKaig, another -- -- *Ovut or The Sea* was so badly directed and so ill played that it was quite impossible to discover what its peculiar quality was; it became only another of those plays in which people come up out of a shipwreck and fall in love with the wrong man and are very mysterious. *Fallen Angels* is the second play of the Actors' Theatre season under Guthrie McClintic. It isn't much good. A few witty lines, an entire act in which Fay Bainter and Estelle Winwood go through the varying phases of two women getting drunk while waiting for the reappearance of a former lover (of both -- that's the play's novelty). Miss Winwood was miscast.



Estelle Winwood, 1920's

Not precisely "the theatre": Angna Enters gave, a few weeks ago, her last recital before a trip to Europe, under auspices a little more splendid socially than any of her others. Three or four times, in the course of the evening, she shone with genius; the rest of the time she was dazzling with incomparable talents; all the time she was unpredictable, honest, a virtuoso with the control of a technician and the integrity of a religious zealot. She was not at her best and I was, with the exceptions of genius noted above, more

impressed than overwhelmed. I am willing to take my aesthetic pleasure in this mood; and when I think of Miss Enters' long solitary struggle, I am elated at her success.

2 X 2 = 5 is the Civic Repertory going down hill. An imported piece of goods without exceptional merit as a satire, with an unusual amount of dulness -- a sort of *Beggar on Horseback* with all the points blunted, and a lot of commonplace jibing at respectability. The intention was to produce it in a stylization approaching the marionette-play; it failed. The settings had the wit which the play and the acting lacked. The theatre's "find" of the season, Mr Sothern, was particularly in need of toning down and of whatever, in the theatre, corresponds to the punishment of small boys who show off before their elders. I hope sincerely that Miss Le Gallienne's enterprise isn't going to pieces -- the appearance of one negligible play is not a sign, I know; but the earnestness and the sincerity with which this trash was produced worries me.

Reinhardt's *Midsummer Night's Dream* is a producer's fantasia on a theme by Shakespeare. I do not mean that it isn't Shakespeare's play: as a play it interested me as much as any other production of it I have seen, which isn't very much. It is, actually, a revel, and lends itself to the elaborate fittings and trappings Reinhardt has given it. The stage structure is full of tricky planes and affords a lovely perspective: the first procession goes "out into the night" with torches against the stars and seems really to pass into remoteness; the dances occur in space, not on inadequate platforms. Reinhardt has moulded his production well; he appeals to all the senses with a certain proportion. But I felt that his true genius -- the genius behind *The Servant or Two Masters*, for example -- was not in this play; the production counted too much on bigness, on whatever was lavish, and cared little for the carrying elements of the play. The Athenian workmen were highly entertaining, and Puck, played by Sokoloff, seemed all the more a creation because one compared him with the *Peter-Pannish* versions of the part known on our stage.

The Irish Players, with all their familiar and admirable qualities are here, having presented, for a start, Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*. They are one of the great companies of players -- one of the few -- and no one who cares at all about the theatre should miss them. I shall review in some detail next month Mr O'Casey's second play, and others of the repertoire.

The night clubs do not come specifically into my field; but fearing that no one else will touch them, I suggest a visit to the Parody Club on one of the early nights of the week when Mr Durante is either trying out new material or indulging his fancy for madness in his song about Daniel the "mowing fool" and other such in-

describable nonsense. In comparison with Durante all the other "nut comedians" and workers in the field of absurdity are sober and logical. Mr Robert Benchley has quite properly given warning that the satirical content in Durante's effects is negligible. The fun is not negligible -- by any means.

=====

MARCH

THE SWAMPER

BY WALTER D. EDMONDS

THEY said that he had lost his mind: at any rate he could not remember anything for very long. That was why he kept on as swamper for Amos Gives's Saloon for so many years. Any man who worked for Gives must have been a half-wit; and if old David got a free supper and breakfast out of the establishment, he got precious little more except the cussing Amos gave him every morning.

David (God help him!) used to come into the bar at five o'clock every morning: that was his regular hour; so there he was at sunrise on this first Saturday in May, unlocking the door with his key. He stopped on the porch and looked down the canal; the saloon was built on the wharf at the top of the hill, so that boaters could come right down the gang, as soon as they tied up, and walk through the bar-door in three steps if they wanted to. This village was quite a place in 1879; three saw-mills on the Black River, which ran past the foot of the town; and the town itself rising up the hill in two tiers of houses. The saloon and Widgeon's hotel stood at the top. The canal licked along their foundations, and the road, coming over the bridge, ran on a level with the second-story windows. What with the mill-hands and the loggers that came in on Saturdays, and the farmers and the boaters, there must have been two thousand people here. And if you were sending a letter to any one of them, instead of "Hawkinsville," you wrote "Slab City, N. Y." on the envelope; and put "Oneida County" in the lower left corner, if you were particular. It really was quite a place: there were a tannery and four stores (dry goods and groceries) and three blacksmiths, and three churches, not counting the Lutheran Church across the canal at the top of the hill. It was just opposite the saloon, so that Mr Ennory used to say that you could see Heaven and Hell in Slab City, right before your eyes, and doing a pretty good trade at that. And if William Durkin was round and drunk (he generally was) he would always want to know which was which.

So here was old David on the stoop of the saloon that morning

on the first Saturday in May, 1879. There were three boats loading matched spruce boarding for Albany tied up at the wharf. He could hear the horses getting up in their stalls in the bows and rattling their halters. It was a warm morning, with a bit of mist on the river, and very still, so that the canal looked like black silk under the rising sun. David pulled out his pouch of Warnick and Brown, Heavy, and filled his pipe and lit it before opening the door. He looked feeble with his straggly grey hair and weak eyes, and his match shook so in his hand that the flame could hardly grab hold of the stick. But he sucked the smoke deep into him and then let it out in a long stream. It was the only smoke in boat or house.

When he went inside, he saw the bar was well enough, so he built a fire in the big chunk stove to take off the damp and another in the kitchen stove to heat water for Amos's shaving. Then he got his pail and mop and put a lot of water on the floor. After he had done that, he went up and knocked at Amos's door and came away, for Amos was a mean man in the early morning. David came downstairs and took the water back off the floor: that was what he called mopping.

He went out into the kitchen and sat down to wait till the water boiled. He couldn't hear Amos stamping round upstairs as usual, but that did not bother him. There was not a sound in the house; and David looked out of the window at the river valley. The mist floated along up-stream on a level with the lowest houses, hiding the meadows; and as he sat there, David began to hear cow-bells tinkling on cows coming in from night-pasture.

The sound was quite clear and full, as sound is in misty weather, and it kept breaking out at different parts all along the valley, until all the mist was ringing like one bell. He must have listened for quite a while, because all at once he heard the kettle boiling loud enough to make him jump and run for a pitcher, which he filled and took upstairs. He stopped at the door, but there wasn't a sound out of Amos, so he knocked again. As Amos did not swear, he opened the door and put the pitcher on the wash-hand-stand.

Then thinking he would like to see what Amos looked like when he was asleep, he went over to the bed. The window was open a crack, and he could hear the cow-bells quite clearly.

Amos Gives was lying on his side with his legs drawn up, and David looked at him a while before he went downstairs and out on the stoop. He sat down in a chair and knocked out his pipe and put in another load. The sun had come in under the roof to warm him so he shoved his hat back on his head, put his feet on the rail, and spat a good spit clear over the wharf into the canal.

He could see a boat drawn by a black team coming up round the bend from Boonville. The boat hung low in the water and the team were having heavy work bringing it up against the current. It would take them all of fifteen minutes to reach the wharf.

The town below was beginning to wake up. David could smell the rising breakfast smokes. On the road he heard a man shouting and a moment after, a four-horse team came out on the dock with a wagon-load of lumber. They drew up opposite the last boat in the line, and the driver went aboard and pounded on the cabin door. At the same time four men appeared from the hotel and began listlessly to hand the lumber into the pit. The boarding was light; one man could handle it alone; so the four had made a line of points between which the boards were raised and lowered, like inch-worms walking. The driver and the boater came over to the saloon.

"Lo, Dave," said the driver.

"Lo," said David.

"Mornin'," said the boater.

"Mornin'," said David.

The two men sat down, the boater removing a battered pipe-hat which he placed under his chair. David did not recognize him. He was a big man with a hearty complexion and a nose like an apple. He wore a dark green shirt without a tie under his loose yellow waistcoat, and his brown trousers just reached the tops of his cow-hide shoes.

"Saloon open?" he asked loudly.

"No," said David.

A woman came out of the cabin of the second boat. She was tall, with hawk-like grey eyes, a strong chin, a fine full figure.

"Mornin', folks," she said.

"Mornin', mam," David replied for all of them.

He knocked out his pipe.

"*Baccer?" asked the boater with the pipe-hat, offering his pouch.

"What kind?"

"Mechanic's Delight."

"Don't never smoke it. That's railroad tobaccer. Warnick and Brown's mine. I used to boat it," said David.

'Did you really?' asked the boater, slightly huffed. David looked too out-at-ends and weak and watery ever to have done anything.

"Eanh," said David. "I boated it."

"That's right," said the teamster. Then he leaned over to the boater.

"David's twirly," he said, indicating his head with his thumb. "Used to be a rich man hereabouts; had a boat of his own. Man of the community; always making money; trying for more. Thought he'd get it by marryin' his daughter to Uberfrau for more money. Didn't work. She ran away. Dave went to pieces; lost his money. Got twirly; look at him."

David listened with a critical cock to his head.

"That's right," he said.

"Poor man," said the woman, pityingly.

"Eanh," continued the teamster, putting flavour in his voice. "Went round by himself after she went off with the boater; he rotted inside, I guess, and went twirly. Been that way for ten years. She was a fine gal; lot of us tried for her. Now look at him; he's a sight to see. Swamps the bar-room for two meals a day and sleeps in the mill barn, long side of my team -- they're good uns. Twirly, but he's all right. Sort of mischeevous -- like a chip-munk. Tell you all about his gal. Says she's a fine lady, now; claims he hears from her; claims she's comin' back to take care of him now he's old. Ain't it right, David?"

"Eanh," said the old man. "Gettin' kind of doddery so she's a-coming back."

"I feel sorry for him," said the woman; "'that's the truth. Poor old man!"

"Funny thing," said the boater.

The sun had come out very hot, and a small breeze rose to flick the water into ripples. The mist had burned away from the river; the meadows shone green here and there with new grass.

"Anne!" roared a man's voice from the second boat. "Where in hell is my shirt?"

The tall woman made a face and went back into the cabin. The teamster twisted himself in his chair to get at his handkerchief.

"Gol," he said. "There's Simms coming in with his boat."

David grunted.

"I seen it."

As the black team passed them, the boat slid in to the wharf.

"New team," said the teamster.

"Whoa!" yelled the man who was driving them. "Can't you stop when I tell you?"

The horses were quite ready to stop; they lowered their heads and seemed to let go of the muscles in their ears and flanks.

The man who was steering ran to the rail and flung a rope ashore which the driver caught and, as the boat ground against the wharf timbers, snubbed to a post. They drew in the bows and tied them. The man on the boat slid a broad gang to the wharf and lifted the roof of the bow compartment. It went up like a box-trap, leaving a door open in the side of the boat; and the team went aboard for breakfast. The three men on the stoop could see them turn round and face the shore before the man lowered the trap. Then they heard the harness jingle as the team shook themselves.

"*Lo, Simms," said the teamster. "New team?"

"*Lo, George. Yes they be. Cheap, too."

"Pretty good. How much?"

"Two fifty. Say..."

He came forward, an angular, middle-sized man with blue shirt and black hat, wearing a gossip's expression.

"Well?" asked the teamster.

"Got a passenger."

"Smells like fertilizer to me."

Simms lost his dramatic forward bend, then recovered.

"Yes," he said. "I'm peddling it. I've got a passenger,

though."

"Where from?"

"Utica. She signed my cabin at Bentley's Oyster Booth and Bar."

"She?"

"I thought that 'd fetch you," said Simms, smirking. "Yes, sir. A fancy woman. Gownds. Dresses. Powders in the morning. Got a New York hat. Took my cabin; and me and Henry slept with the horses. Turn about at the stove."

"What's she coming here for?" asked the boater with the pipe-hat.

"I don't know. Aims at business, she says."

"What in?"

"Aims to start a bar. She used to work at Bentley's, I hear."

"Not Amy Silverstone?" asked the boater with the pipe-hat.

"Yes, sir. I never seen her before. But that's her name. Swell and stylish and tiled with money. Fancy woman, she is."

"Well, I'll be dredged," exclaimed the boater with the pipe-hat. "What she'd want to come here for, beats me. They give her a name on the Erie" -- he went on with a leer -- "'she ran a cook's agency. She had a name all right. She did more than run the bar."

The man on the second boat came out of the cabin followed by the tall woman.

"Guess I'll have a drink," he said. "Hot day. I'm dry."

"Mornin'," said David for all of them.

He sat up with importance.

"The bar ain't open."

"Oh hell," said the boater, and he sat down, while his cook sat down, too, a little way off from the men.

"Anne," he yelled at her, "go back and clean up! Think I'm paying you wages just to look at you?"

The tall woman tossed her head.

"You'd better look at me while you have the chance, Goudger."

"Git on back, dang you!"

"I'm no slave," said the tall woman. "It ain't hard for me to find work."

"Oh, all right."

"Speaking of bars," said the teamster, turning to Simms, "your passenger'll have a job getting Amos Gives's trade."

David coughed and gazed critically at the tiller of Simms's boat.

"No she won't," he said.

The others slewed round at him.

"Kind of twirly," explained the teamster. "He don't mean harm."

They relaxed.

"I wish this damned saloon would open," said the man the cook called Goudger, plaintively. "I'm dry."

"It won't open," said David.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Goudger. "'That's a good un. Won't open on Saturday with the loggers coming in. Haa, haa! Wait till I tell Amos."

"You won't tell him," said David, and he spat.

"Why not?" said Simms, sarcastically. "'Wouldn't you tell us why not, Dave?"

"Eanh, I reckon so. I'm goin' fishing."

They guftawed.

"Thinks Gives'll let his swamper go fishing on Saturday!"

"He won't stop me," said David. "He's dead."

They fell silent and rather white.

The tall woman had laughed, shrilly...

They stared uneasily at the windows behind them.

"What's wrong?" asked a woman's voice.

The men swung about to face the canal. Simms's passenger was coming on to the stoop. She was something to see. She had a short, plump figure, a wide mouth, and cool, affable, blue eyes. Her brilliantly yellow hair was done up in curls at the back of her head. She wore a stiff, apple-green dress with full skirts, a short coat of the same colour trimmed in scarlet, and a red and green hat beflowered with yellow pansies, which was drawn down tight on her head. Her plump, pink hands came forth from the throats of her long yellow gloves, and the rings on her fingers threw glitters all over her breast. Her voice was hearty and had a cheerful lift to it.

"What's wrong?" she repeated.

The men had all been shaken pretty badly; but the teamster managed to explain, while the rest gaped at the woman. She gave the teamster her full attention, bending toward him with a suggestion of graciousness. As she listened, she composed her features to a proper expression of melancholy, so that little lines made themselves apparent under her rouge -- particularly about her mouth and nostrils. Then she straightened up and gave them another shock.

"Of course, it's too bad," she said. "But it amounts to the same thing as evacuation of the premises, don't it? You see, I own it; it belongs to me; I bought it last month; and he was to move out to-day."

"He ain't going to dispute that," said David.

She gave them a fine smile; and they realized all at once that she had looks. There was something cool about her; they liked her.

"I guess as Mr Gives went out this way, I'll have to keep the bar closed to-day. But I'll open it Monday night. My name's Amy Silverstone and I'll be glad to see all you gents here then. From seven to eight all drinks is on the house. Now will somebody be so obliging as to fetch a doctor?"

She swept past them with a swagger of her full skirts.

"Fancy woman," said Simms, with pride in his voice.

The teamster went off for the doctor and Lawyer Gannet.

"By gol," said the boater with the pipe-hat, "you'd hardly think she had a name on the Erie, now, would you? Well, she has."

"I've heerd tell," said one of the men who had been unloading lumber, "I've heerd tell that she's the hardest drinker on the Big Ditch."

"That's right," said the boater. 'To see her so re-fined and bold-looking, you'd hardly think it was so. But when she was into Bentley's, she'd drink with any man who'd ask her; and she'd never say no. Lots of times a man would set himself up to drink her down under, but he allus gave way first. Jeepers! Half the time she'd take him off to bed, and then come down and start in drinking again, cold sober as your Sunday razor."

There was a general murmur in the group.

"It don't hardly seem true," said Goudger; "but I've heard plenty as had seen her say it was."

"She has her own partic'lar drink," said someone else.

"Eanh," said the boater with the pipe-hat. "She always drinks her own."

"She's a fancy woman, all right," said Simms. "Look at the cool way she took hold here. Old Dave had nothing on her."

"Hell!" growled Goudger. "Now I don't get no drink at all. Anne, you wash them dishes -- hear me?"

He herded the tall woman off to the boat.

"What're you going to do now?" asked the boater with the pipe-hat.

"I'm going fishing," said David.

He got up slowly and went back down the hill through the town, walking stooped over, his tattered trousers dragging about his heels, his hat on the back of his head, his watery eyes peering from side to side.

The others could see puffs of smoke pop back past his ear now and then, until he disappeared into the mill barn.

"Funny thing," said the boater with the pipe-hat, dubiously.

David had the right of it all round: the saloon did not open;

nobody told Gives; and he went fishing.

He got some cheese sandwiches at the hotel, and the cook gave him some bad potato cuttings in a bag. He walked a mile up the canal to Izzard's Cove and sat down on the tow-path. When he had lighted his pipe, he baited a hand line with a piece of potato and threw the hook out into the water. Across from where he sat lay Izzard's old boat. It had been tied up there to the far shore for five years now, ever since the smallpox epidemic when they had isolated Izzard and his cook and driver in the set-back. It was one of the few things David remembered perfectly. He had had to bring provisions up from the store every morning and leave them at the foot of the tree under which he now sat. Then he would go back a way while the cook or the driver would row slowly over in a boat and get them. After they had rowed back, David would return and give the news across the intervening water and ask about old Izzard.

Old Izzard had died; the others came out after three months and went away. Later on it got about that Izzard had not died of smallpox. But David put no stock in such rumours.

It was a gloomy spot in which to spend a holiday; but it was a great piece of water for carp, being the only set-back for a mile

It did not make much difference how the old devil had died; it was good riddance, David said to himself. If it hadn't been for Izzard with his high notional talk about the canal, David's daughter, Molly, would have married Uberfrau who owned the mill and had a fine house to live in, and David could have given up boating for a comfortable life. The old boar-hog! He'd snatched her right out from under his nose; and not hide nor hair had he heard of her since, in spite of his keeping up stories about her for the form of it. She was probably cooking it for some boater on the Erie, now. She might be married; David doubted it. She was too ignorant a girl to get away with a thing like that; she'd trust a gipsy with a twenty-dollar gold piece; she was that kind -- most likely she was dead... .

It had hit David hard, her going off like that -- look at him now. He leaned over and looked into the water at himself, swamper of the Slab City Saloon.

Then he had a bite, and he settled down to fishing...

On Sunday mornings, David usually got up pretty late. He had learned the news the night before: Lawyer Gannet had verified the fancy woman's statement; and the doctor had verified David's. He said that Gives had died of apoplexy. The saloon was in new hands.

That did not disturb David. He let himself into the bar; and then wrinkled his nose in disgust. Mrs Silverstone had been busy. The bar was clean as a whistle; there were fresh calendar pictures tacked to the walls; the stove was blacked and the cupola top had been painted with gilt; the bar and the floor were oiled down slick. Even the windows had been washed.

He counted four new spittoons along the bar, bright brass ones.

"Cripus!" he snorted. "Jeepers Cripus!"

He spat on the side of the stove. He was outraged. He lifted his voice and shouted querulously, "Saaay! Who's been monkey-ing with my saloon?"

Someone stirred upstairs in Gives's bedroom; firm slippered steps advanced to the head of the stairs; a pair of feet appeared on the treads; and slowly Mrs Silverstone came into view. The fancy woman had on a night-gown under a bright red wrapper, and her brilliant yellow hair dangled in curl-papers, with a row of odd little metal pins along her forehead. David stepped back abashed. Her plump face was lathered and she carried a razor in her right hand.

Suddenly the lather crinkled and broke over her mouth, and she grinned. She came up to the old man with her buoyant walk, the swagger noticeable even without her flaunting skirts.

"Say, old man, how'd you come in?"

If Mrs Silverstone had been impressive in her giddy clothes, in this war regalia she was stunning. David took his eyes off the razor and some of his indignation gave way to timidity, for the exhilaration of the preceding day's events was wearing off. He held up the key and muttered surlily, "I'm swamper into this saloon."

"Ah," said the fancy woman. "Be you really?"

She rested the knuckles of her right hand on her hip and leaned against the bar. It was an attitude calculated to please; but the razor and lather gave it an outlandish touch. David repeated with a slight whine, "I'm swamper into this saloon."

"Well," said the fancy woman, "if you're swamper here, clean up that spit before you're fired."

David lifted hand and voice to protest, but he met the fancy woman's eye.

"Clean it up," she commanded.

"Eanh." He was abject.

When he had finished, the fancy woman told him to sit down.

"Now," she said, in a pleasanter voice. "You're David, ain't you?"

"Eanh."

"You're an old man, ain't you? You ain't much good for work."

David shuffled his feet and looked into his hat, which he had just thought of taking off. "I'm allowed pretty good with a mop," he said.

"Look here, old man. Who do you think cleaned up this filth to make it look like this? By Jeepers, I ought to know how you swamp, if anybody does!"

"Yes mam," said David. "I guess you do."

She was mollified, apparently, for she came over to the bench and sat down beside him. The sunlight played over the two of them from the east window, and the fancy woman's full figure in the scarlet wrapper made a great blob of colour that the floor caught up in reflections about her feet. She wiped the lather from her lips with the back of her hand and pulled a cigar out of her pocket.

"Got a match?"

David lighted it for her. She crossed her legs, regardless of convention.

"Old man, you and me'd better talk business."

"Eanh," said David, scenting a turn in his favour and pulling out his pipe.

The fancy woman mouthed her cigar and puffed leisurely.

"Now," she began, "this ain't the first bar I've run. I know the trade; but I'll be eternally tarred if any bar of mine is going to look like this one did. I'm going to get all trade, mill-hands and the more re-fined -- them as want to smell their likker. Now I'll try you out as a swamper; but you'll have to clean to suit me. No

smooching in the corners; and the floors oiled every week. Hear me?"

"Eanh," said David.

"All right," said Mrs Silvertone. "Now, I've got my own keep a-coming up from Utica, see? And he can handle any rum-pus if I need help -- which I generally don't. But I'll want you round for odd jobs. I won't have you looking like a junk-heap, so I've got some clothes for you, new pants, shirt, and shoes. You'll sleep out back in the kitchen, and you'll get your meals, and two dollars a week extry. Take it or leave it."

"I guess I'll take it," said David, mustering his dignity. "Sold!"

The fancy woman smiled; she seemed to have a liking for the old man.

"You're pretty old, ain't you?"

"Middlin'," said David.

"What happened to make you swamp for such a cheap bar? They tell me you owned a boat, once."

David launched on his sorrows.

"That's right. Me and my datter used to boat it, up and down the Erie, Buffalo, Syracuse, New York a lot of times. I had a farm here, and a man to work it. But she went away on me. Sneaked out, she did." He put his hand to his eyes. "She was a purty little gal, black-haired she was, kind of soft like. I was all tore up when she sneaked on me. Yes, mam, she went away, she did, and left me, a pore old man, and here I be a-swamping."

"Pore old man," echoed the fancy woman. "They tell you was mean to her."

"Mean? Me mean? Say, would she be writing to me every week if I was mean? Married to a pork dealer she is; and she's coming back to look out after me, she writes. Would she do that if I was mean -- her such a quiet little gal, and gentle with no harsh ways?"

He sobbed at the recollection and pulled out a red cotton handkerchief to wipe his eyes. The fancy woman stared out of the window as if she had not heard.

"Mebbe I was mean," said David; "by her lights I might've

been. But I done it for the best, and she won't hold against me. Say, you never seen her, did you, when you was on the Big Ditch? Molly, she was; a little black-haired girl; kind of trembly ways?"

"No," said Mrs Silverstone. "I never did."

She stretched her plump figure, raising her arms over her head, so that the razor tossed swift glitters of sunlight between the beams. She yawned, got slowly to her feet, and went over to the bar, where she paused to examine something. David followed her.

"Nosey!" she said looking up at him with a grin. She paused, then spoke to him again. "See them bottles? That's my special mixture. The Delta Distill'ry puts it up for me; I have to have it with all the drinking I have to do for sociability and business. Now I ain't mean. I don't grudge you a swaller now and then; but shat stuff costs money, and if you touch it, by Cripus, I'll ride you for fair!"

David took a look at her and backed away.

"Now you set down till I've dressed," she said, tossing her cigar into one of the new spittoons, "and then I'll learn you to clean

"Yes mam," said David.

He listened to her moving round in her room for a minute, then put on his hat and sneaked over to the bar with elaborate caution.

"Ride me?" he snorted. "The old rum-hugger!"

He found a loose cork in one of the bottles, and his watery eyes gleamed. Leaning over, with the suniight coming along the bar to fall on the small bald patch on the top of his head and the end of his nose, he looked like a thieving chipmunk. He worked the cork out, raised the bottle to his mouth and, with a great effort, swallowed noiselessly.

A look of tearful surprise enshrouded his face. He replaced the bottle, hurried over to a spittoon, and emptied his mouth of the liquid.

Her particular mixture! The old scut!

He sat down again and watched the stairs with furtive eyes as the fancy woman began to descend...

When he sat down on the stoop of the saloon on Monday evening, David smarted inwardly from the sarcasms of Mrs Silver-

stone. He had done nothing right, according to her notions; and he objected, anyway, to being ordered round. It wasn't as if he had never swamped before. He had done it for years.

The new bar-tender had arrived to exasperate him further, for he regarded David as a personal slave. How could David dispute him? The man was a big, black-haired fellow with the forearms of a smith and the fists of a prize-fighter. He wore very tight clothes, a red waistcoat, and a top hat tilted to one side. He was almost as fancy as the fancy woman herself. It made David snarl to think of him. In spite of the good supper in his insides; he recalled Amos Gives almost with approval.

But he had new clothes on and a dollar of his wages in his pocket -- the other dollar being on him and in him in the form of a new hat and two glasses of whiskey. His feelings were verging on exuberance. With the bar behind him opening for the first time under the new management, it was plain that he regarded himself as a figure of importance.

It was seven o'clock. The sunset had tinged some clouds above the canal with bright orange. Four boats were tied up at the wharf and a big lumber-raft was in the making just below the bridge. The sounds and smells of cookery floated from the cabins of the boats; and in one of them a man was singing hoarsely. In the bar David could hear Mrs Silverstone and the new 'keep putting on the finishing touches. Now and then one glass rang against another.

A man and a woman came off the end boat in the line. David recognized Goudger and his cook, the tall woman who had laughed hysterically at the news of Gives's death.

"°Lo, Dave," said Goudger.

"Evenin'," said David.

"Bar open now, eh?"

"I reckon."

"I see they're a-keeping you on."

"They be," said David.

Goudger stroked the back of his neck, glanced at David, at the door, and tramped inside. The woman sat down on the chair next to David's.

"Evening, mam," said he.

She smiled.

Other men came to the stoop and spoke to David and went inside. David gave them all greeting with an air. You might have thought, almost, that he was proprietor of the saloon. He pushed his hat back on his head, hooked his thumbs through his galluses, tilted his chair against the wall. He smoked incessantly. "Lo," he said, and, "Evenin', Pete;" "Yes it does seem like a droughth coming on;" "Them new horses of Slinger's looks fair to middling, all right, but I'll bet they're over nine ;" "Eanh, business is so-so. "Course it ain't Saturday, but you wait."

They passed him, good-humouredly responsive to his comments. The woman stayed at his side.

"No taste for likker, mam? Very good gin from the new Rome distill'ry. Some prime whiskey."

The tall woman said nothing; but she smiled, a thin little smile, whenever he spoke. She leaned forward in her chair, elbows on knees, chin in hand, her eyes moody. David said to himself that she was a fine specimen of a woman; he didn't remember seeing many as good-looking. There was something bold about her, too. She had a deep-fringed blue shawl over her shoulders and a straight wool dress that managed to bring out her figure, here and there.

While he looked at the tall woman, who in turn stared down the canal, David started to hear a voice murmur, "Pardon, David."

"Eh!"

"Beg pardon, Dave. Sorry to interrupt. Is thish th' saloon?"

The speaker swayed unsteadily on his feet and regarded the two others with a vague earnestness. David grunted.

"My name's Will'am Durkin, mam! Pleasure."

He turned to David.

"Say, Dave. What's thish I hear about the fancy woman -- drinking with everybody all night long and not saying no or turning up her toes? Jeepers, that ain't in nature and I don't believe it, do you, mam?"

The tall woman remained silent.

"I don't believe it can be done. Been tryin' it m'self for twenty-two yearsh. B'Jeepers! I'm a-goin' 'o see. I'll set Pa's son

again' a wommin any day."

He bowed profoundly and elaborately to the tall woman, manoeuvring his feet with skill.

"Beg -- hic (pardon). Beg pardon, mam. Nothing pershonal."

The tall woman looked at his bottom waistcoat button for a minute and then looked back down the canal; and Durkin sighed and disappeared into the bar.

It grew dusky; then the darkness gathered under the stoop-roof. Lights, which had already been lighted in the bar, shone past David and the tall woman, painting their faces with shadow.

The woman drew a deep breath.

"Eanh," said David.

It became quite dark -- there were no stars and the canal flowed unseen save for two patches of water running through the light from the windows. Laughter echoed in the bar-room; but on the stoop, the sound of it was dim.

"So she gave you a job, did she?" asked the tall woman.

David drew himself forward on his chair. "Well, I said as how I'd swamped here so long the saloon was as much mine as it was hers."

He paused, but as the woman had nothing to say, he went on: "She didn't give me no answer to that; so I struck her for bed and board and new clothes besides my pay."

"What'd she do?"

"Oh," said David, modestly, and he hitched his new trousers over his knees to ease the crease, "Oh, she took it pretty good."

"I'm surprised," said the tall woman.

"Ain't you goin' in?" asked David, after a while.

"No."

Someone in the bar was singing *The Orphan Ballad Singers* in a long-drawn, nasal tenor.

"Oh dreary, weary are our feet,

And weary, dreary is our way;
Through many a long and crowded street
We've wandered mournfully to-day.

My little sister, she is pale;
She is too tender and too young

To bear the Autumn's sullen gale --
And all day long the child has sung.

She was our mother's favourite child,
Who loved her for her eyes so blue.
She is so delicate and mild,
She cannot do what I can do.

She never met her father's eyes
Although they were so like her own,
In some far distant land he lies,
A father to his child unknown...

A sentimental hush fell on the room behind them. The tall woman sighed. Old David hid his face in his hands.

"Say," he said suddenly between his fingers, "you ain't seen my datter on the Erie, has you? She was like that. A little, trembly gal, with black hair. She sneaked on me and I ain't seen her since."

The tall woman rested her chin on her fist.

"Don't you never hear from her?"

"Yes. Eanh. She writes. Says she's comin' back to take care of me now I'm old and dodderly. But she's long coming. You ain't seen her on the Big Ditch, has you?"

"No," said the woman.

Bit by bit the laughter and clatter were resumed in the bar. It had grown damp and a little cooler. The tall woman shivered.

"Better go in," said David.

"I don't want to."

"Why not?"

He wasn't sure of the tall woman's answer, if she made any, for Mrs Silverstone's hearty lifting laughter rang out just then.

David decided to remain with the tall woman. He had made a great impression, he told himself, and he did not want to have it spoiled by being ordered about if he went into the bar.

Goudger came out with another man reeling on his arm.

"Hello, David," they said.

"Hello. *Lo Bill."

"My namesh Will'am D-durkin," said Goudger's companion with high seriousness. "You're David, if thatsh y-you."

"You're drunk," said David scornfully.

"My shame ish open 'o all men," admitted William collapsing on to a chair. "My glorioush nation! That fancy woman can d-drink! My hat'sh off to her."

The boater with the pipe-hat appeared in the door.

"It sure is," he said. "I just saw George putting it in the stove."

"Bye-bye hat," apostrophized William Durkin. 'Nev' mind. The woman wash too much for me. I got to believe about her now. But it ain't in nature. She'sh been too much for more men than me. She drinksh with them all."

"That's right," said Goudger. "She does it with all that steps up to her and never turns a hair. Them that's seen her in Bentley's say she'll go on that way all night. She uses her own whiskey. She's got her own partic'lar drink."

"I've seen her in Bentley's," said the boater with the pipe-hat. "And it ain't no lie."

"Jeepersh," said William. "I wish I knowed how she did it."

The tall woman had moved away when Goudger came out. Now she rejoined them. David grinned at her.

"I know," he said to Durkin.

"How?"

"I've drunk her partic'lar drink. I tried it yesterday when she was upstairs getting dressed," he added with an air of importance.

"What wash it?" asked Durkin. "Old Jam-maicy?"

"Cold tea," said David.

"I don't believe it," said Goudger.

"The old man's right," said the tall woman. "I know."

"How do you know, Anne?" asked Goudger.

"I worked for her in Utica," said the tall woman. "She got her claws on me when I first come to Utica, and she left her marks on me. My God!"

"I got you through her agency,'
kicking about?"

"You're one of the marks, God help you,'
in a flat voice.

"I think you're a jackass," said Goudger.

He guided William back into the bar.

"So you know her, too?" said the boater in the pipe-hat.

"I got a taste of her this morning," said David. "She thinks she knows the whole damned world."

"She dang near does," said the boater.

"IT know her," said the tall woman. "We came from the same part of the state, only she came earlier than I did."

"Thinks she knows the whole damned world," repeated David.

"Bossed me round. Bossed me round ragged. . . ."

"She took a fancy to me," went on the tall woman, "because we've got the same name."

"Listen," said the boater with the pipe-hat. "She drinks
said Goudger.

"What're you said the tall woman

"She's a devil," said the tall woman.

"Listen here, David," said the boater. "You know where them bottles of hers is kept?"

"Eanh. At this end of the bar. They've got the same label as the three-hundred-per-cent Delta Special Whiskey, and that's right alongside."

"Well," said the boater. "Let's play a joke on her. I'll get some of the boys to keep the 'keep busy and you shift the bottles when he ain't watching. Then I'll drink with her, by Cripus!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed the tall woman. "That would be some joke."

' "I'il bet that'll take the fancy out of her," said the boater.

David got slowly to his feet.

"Bossed me at swamping, hey? All right."

He and the boater with the pipe-hat went into the bar.

The bar was crammed with men, amazement on their faces, staring, a few even forgetting to drink.. Tobacco smoke swayed back and forth to the wind of loud conversation. Lamps, in brackets on the walls, looked dim behind it. The strength of it was stifling.

At the bar the 'keep was hustling. His face was crimson, his brow sweaty; only the deftness of his big hands held him abreast of the demands for more liquor. Slab City was drinking itself under.

At the far end of the room, the fancy woman sat beside a table. Her face beamed and she scattered laughter on all and sundry. The essence of good-humour shone on her cheeks and forehead. She wore a bright yellow dress, cut square at the bosom and very low; and a black ribbon was plaited in her brilliant yellow hair. Her fingers blazed with rings; and about her neck were so many necklaces and locketts that they clinked to her movements.

A teamster was sitting opposite to her, drinking turn about, he with a bottle of whiskey, she with her own bottle slung in a little wicker basket at her waist. The rest looked on over their glasses; she had not declined a drink all evening; and here she was, the most sober in the room. Her attentions were impartial -- but they all liked her; and, as the evening progressed, universal opinion pronounced her handsomer.

The teamster got up from the table, unsteadily, holding the back of his chair with fumbling hands. There was a look of disappointment in his face; but he managed a grin in answer to the fancy woman's good-natured laughter.

At the back of the room, the boater with the pipe-hat was holding a conference with Goudger and five or six others. After a minute or two, the group descended on the bar, noisily demanding mixed drinks, until the 'keep's hands flew like a sleight-of-hand artist's. Under cover of their roaring, David slunk behind the bar. He found three bottles of the "mixture" and replaced them with the Delta Special.

Laughing loudly, the others took their seats.

"Work it?" they asked David.

"Easy," he said, his eyes gleaming like a squirrel's.

The boater with the pipe-hat got up and went over to Mrs Silverstone.

"I ain't seen you for a year. You've sure got things fixed up slick."

"Why, it's Mr Greenshawl, ain't it? I'm real glad to see you. You come this way regular?"

"Pretty regular."

"Set down, set down," said the fancy woman. "What'll you have?"

"Delta Special."

"You was always a hard drinker," chuckled the fancy woman. "Joe!" she called the barkeep. "Bring a special for Mr Greenshawl, and some of my mixture."

The barkeep brought them, taking the corks out deftly on the way.

"Here's how," said Greenshawl.

A silence had fallen on the room. Something in the boater's attitude, perhaps, had warned them that something was up. Perhaps it was the sudden stillness of the men who had just been roaring for the 'keep's attention.

"Here's how," echoed the fancy woman, her finger curled as she

lifted her glass.

Greenshaw] gulped his, and dene his eyes for an instant. When he opened them, he saw Mrs Silverstone's glass as empty as his own.

"Strong likker," he said, shaking his head.

"Yes," said she, "I like it pretty well myself. But I generally stick to my own mixture."

He could not see a flicker on her face. She filled her glass and held it to the light; and her hand was steady. He began to mistrust David.

"Drawing lumber?" asked the fancy woman.

"Eanh," said Greenshawl, putting his pipe-hat under his chair.

"A good haul!" she said, and drank again.

"Good trade for you!" said Greenshawl, and as he drank he rested his elbow on the table.

"He's feeling it a'ready," whispered the man on David's right. "And she's cold sober."

"She's so bung full of tea," said the man on his left, "she's got to get oiled first. Wait for the end of this glass."

They waited. From between them David stared at the fancy woman with a sudden horror.

"You ain't such a quick drinker as you used to be, Greenshawl," she was saying.

He mustered a laugh.

"Getting older," he said.

"That's right," she agreed. "I ain't the hand I used to be, myself. If it wasn't for the mixture I make, I'd have to give it up."

"She's like rock-ballast," said the man on David's right.

David was afraid. The tall woman was standing in the doorway.

"She's commencing to sweat," said the man on his left.

A dull brick red had flooded the fancy woman's cheeks. It grew darker swiftly. But her attitude of self-possession remained unshaken...-

Greenshawl groped for his hat and rose unsteadily with the last glass of his bottle held before him.

"Mrs Silverstone," he said shakily, "you're solid! Ill drink to you, and proud to do it."

She got to her feet and grinned. But there was a stiffness in her lips that made it hard for her to speak. And the dark red of her cheeks had flushed her whole face and breast.

"I can take a joke," she said, "as well as the next."

She stood quite steady and raised her right hand to her mouth to blow a kiss, without noticing the empty bottle still clenched in it. As her hand came opposite her chin, her fingers relaxed and let the bottle smash on the floor. She tottered suddenly and regained her balance with an effort.

Then she fell. For an instant in the dead stillness the tobacco smoke swung lower from the ceiling.

"What in hell?" cried the barkeep running over to her. The others crowded round. The barkeep bent over her. All at once he reached out his hand and laid it on her breast. Nobody said anything. It came upon them that she was dead.

She had fallen backwards with her arms flung up over her head, and her yellow dress caught the light about their feet. She had on red stockings and red-heeled shoes. The swagger was all gone out of her clothes. She looked as if someone had dropped an over-large bouquet of geraniums and marigolds to the floor, where they had been stepped on.

Old David whimpered as he looked at her.

The tall woman came in. She pushed the men aside and stared down at the fancy woman.

"I used to think," she said, "that woman wore a wig."

She squatted down.

"I'm going to find out."

"What the hell?" said the barkeep; but he did not stop her.

The tall woman laid her hand on Mrs Silverstone's hair and pulled gently, and then tugged. Mrs Silverstone's mouth fell open.

"If it wash a wig," said William Durkin, "it would come off."

The tall woman parted the hair with her fingers. It showed black at the roots.

"She dyed it," said the tall woman.

"How did it happen?" asked the barkeep.

"It was a joke, that's all," said Goudger.

"Who done it?"

"David," said two or three. "He shifted the bottles."

The barkeep snarled.

"You dirty little twirk, you've done us out of two soft jobs."

"She oughtn't to run a saloon," whined David, "if she can't drink her own likker."

"You shut up."

"I guess maybe we ought to pick her off the floor," said the barkeep. He and Greenshaw carried her up to her room.

"I'm going to get out of here to-night," exclaimed Goudger. "Anne!"

The tall woman came over to him. She stopped on the porch where David had sat down again. The old man cowered when she spoke.

"She's dead all right."

David moaned.

"You damned fool," said Goudger, "that was a hell of a joke to play on a woman. Why, she might've been your datter for all you know."

He went aboard his boat, lit a lantern, and started getting his team out on the tow-path. He hung the lantern in the bow.

"Lucky I finished loading this lumber Saturday," he growled.
"Hurry up, Anne."

The tall woman followed, leaving David bent over his knees on the porch steps. He looked up in time to see the tall woman pass under the lantern light, her profile clearly etched against the planking.

"Take me along, Mr Goudger."

"Hell no," said Goudger.

"I could steer."

"I don't want you along."

The tall woman spoke out of the darkness of the stern.

"Poor old man."

The horses started, and little by little the lantern dwindled.

The men in the saloon trooped out on the stoop. One of them, who had overheard Goudger's remark, taunted David.

"That was some joke of yourn; why it might've been your daughter. She had black hair."

"No, no," cried David.

The barkeep came out.

"It's a funny thing," he remarked. "She come from this part of the state."

"Oh Lord!" whimpered David.

"I just found a paper upstairs," said the 'keep. 'Silverstone ain't any name of hers. She was Molly . . ." he held the paper to the light of the window, 'Molly Johnson, and she came from hereabouts."

"That lets you out, Dave," said a teamster -- with a forced laugh.

"She was a fancy woman," said Greenshawl, taking off his pipe-hat and wiping his forehead.

"She's dead," said another.

David had risen to his feet. His hands jumped and fluttered as he tried to fill his pipe. His face was quite white in the light from the windows.

"We come from the same part of the state' . . . "We've got the same name,'" he repeated the tall woman's words.

"Molly," he said.

He began to sob with the braying noise of a small boy.

The barkeep stared at him with scornful pity.

"Say, you didn't kill your datter. She ain't your datter. What're you crying about?"

"No, no," cried David. "But I seen her."

He started off down the tow-path after Goudger's boat, stooped over, at his slow walk.

"Pore Dave," said the teamster; "he's twirly, but he don't mean harm."

Greenshaw] put on his pipe-hat.

"It's a funny thing," he said, dubiously.

SLEEPING BY THE SEA

BY HAROLD MONRO

The tall old waves seethe onward to the beach,
With dismal loud explosion boom and fall;
(Their reckless parent wind that follows each
Now nourishes them high, now starves them small).

They range like warriors battering a wall,
Who flood, invincible, gigantic, slow
Until their rising tide at length will reach
To their doomed town's indubitable fall.

But they are only furrows on the sea.
I, anxious bedded listener, stare and ask.
The generations climb Eternity ;
The waves deceive the shore: each wears a mask,

And each complacently fulfils a task.
The waves burst their cracked water. Their long blow
Furrows my anxious brain as I lie here.
They seem to drench me with their overflow ;

But we are cousins, for we are so near
That I might well ignore them: yet I fear.
Their threat is so terrific through their sound,
I shrink to earth; I burrow into ground.

THE GIFT OF THE FIRST PRESENTATION

BY KWEI CHEN

IT was soon after breakfast. Stealthily I made my way out to the garden house. There I folded back my sleeve-mufs; I shook off my felt-soled shoes, held only by the toe-covering, tugged at the cotton socks, and rolled up the long trouser legs from my now bare ankles. I dug my toes into the warming earth, just to try them -- for it was spring and the saps were running.

"This morning I must complete my dam. Perhaps I shall find fish this very afternoon!" This I said to myself, imagining the speckled silver-green bodies -- lithe and lacy like the scurry of finny Foam Flower on the painted roll in my father's collection . . . perhaps, he would hang the lovely Foam Flower picture to-day, for with us that is suitable to the walls which is seasonable to the year!

At the edge of our garden flowed a tiny streamlet, beyond which extended the bamboo forest. To this I walked, and stood for a while, hesitating. Should I indeed work on my dam this fine morning? Or dig bamboo shoots? There were so many enticing occupations! Springtimes not a single soul in our village is not working. The men are in the rice-fields. The women are spinning and weaving, and their clean, shrill voices penetrate the lattices screening them from the eye. Not even the children are at leisure. If you do not hear them from the schoolhouses, shouting out their lessons, you will see them cow-back, blowing famously at their bamboo flutes, or barefoot like myself busily at work on dams for the village brooks.

I decided to postpone bamboo-shoot digging to another day. Somehow I felt that I should finish the work which I had begun. Besides, Mother had told me often enough never to leave one work unfinished in order to start another. Then, too, we might expect rain at any hour -- for it was spring -- and after the rains come

sudden floods, swelling the village brooks into swift little rivers. The speckled Foam Flower travel upstream at this season, upstream with the flood. So, if one have a cunning dam prepared, with the retreat of the flood they are caught in the pool it creates. I set to work at once, to complete my dam.

Alone I worked, with diligence and hopefulness. The morning sun of the late springtime was all loveliness. The water was a little chilly, but only soothingly chilly. And it was so fresh and clear! No sooner had I roiled it with the mud of the dam-making than it became clear once more, all of its own flow. This gave an added joy to my work. I liked to see the incessant coming of the clear water, driving away the muddied water...

"Ching-yii, Ching-yii!"

I heard my name called, and, a little frightened, I turned. It might be Mother, who had warned me to stay away from the stream. This was because the Astrologer had carefully cautioned her to keep me far from the evil influence of the Water-Star and all that was within his influence. For my part, I should tell the Astrologer to mind his own stars, and sing to his hu-ching! To my mind Astrologers know little enough either of stars or music!

But it was only my grandmother's nurse.

"Oh, here you are! Get out of the water quickly! I won't tell your mother this time -- but I shall if ever I find you there again...Your mother wants you at once. Two very dear and honourable guests have come."

"Who are they? And why do guests always wish to see me?" I am irritated. I do not like to have my work interrupted. It might rain this very night, and my pool become an underwater garden, filled with Foam Flower.

"They are from a distance. You'll learn to know them. Come on now and change your clothes."

"Ching-yii," says my mother when I have made my appearance in the parlour -- now with my handsomest flowered robe and jacket and silk-topped shoes -- 'koto to Third Aunt."

"So this is Ching-yii," observes the guest. "How well he knows polite manners." She turns to me: "You are in school, I suppose?"

I shake my head, embarrassed, but my mother answers for me, apologetically :

"I have not felt like sending him away with his brothers. At present I devote whatever leisure I have to teaching him. And you know that he has been adopted by the Merciful Goddess."

I was standing beside my mother, motionless and with bowed head. I was not at all interested in her conversation with Third Aunt. There was another guest, who also was in the room. My heart was throbbing.

I could see only her dress -- white linen printed with green bamboo leaf design. She was seated sedately, with her hands folded in her lap, and I could see her hands, little delicate hands adorned with lovely bracelets of jade as translucently green as the bodies of my admired Foam Flower in the clear water. She was seated close beside her mother, and I ventured -- shielded from observation by the conversational interest of my elders -- to take a brief, surreptitious glance at her face. Beautiful! beyond poets' words beautiful! My cheeks, my ears, my neck -- I could feel them hot and red. I knew that I had been impolite, yet I did not wish to leave the place; I should have been content to stay if but for the hope of another vision of the cocoon-smooth hair and the bright black eyes and the lotus-petal cheeks of her! Once again I tried to look up -- but manners had conquered courage, and I dared go no further than her shoulder, and the smooth curve beneath her chin. -- There, around her neck, was a silver ring, and suspended from it a pendant inscribed with the two characters which pray "Long Life" for their wearer. I was delighted. For I had had a neck-ring of the same kind. It was now two years since I had ceased to wear it. People regarded it as unbecoming for a boy to wear a neck-ring after he had passed his eighth birthday. Girls, of course, might continue with theirs until the age of ten. Nevertheless, I wished that I might show her my ring, and that I might closely examine hers. If we could only compare them intimately, she and I...But I knew that this was impossible.

For the moment I was sunk in sadness. If I were but a girl! or she a boy cousin and not a girl cousin! It did not occur to me to rebel against the established code of a Confucian family, but I was conscious, and keenly conscious, of suffering from this ancient and honoured law of familiar deportment. Right though it might be, it was depriving me of a playmate for whom I longed . . . parlours and conversations and sittings-in-chairs were all well enough for grown people; they seemed to enjoy them . . . but for us, the two of us, my lovely cousin and my longing self . . . why, there might be Foam Flower in the pool even now! The thought was maddening, and no doubt I appeared to be tired and awkward; and when I heard my mother say: "You are excused, Ching-yii," [hurried away from the parlour.

Directly I went to my bedroom. I took from its red leather box my silver neck-ring, and examined it attentively to see if it really closely resembled the one worn by my girl cousin. Yes, there was no mistaking! They were verily mates! I was elated, for here at least was a symbol of kinship, and I felt as if I knew my lovely cousin as well as if hours of playtime had been passed together. I remembered, too, that the ring had been given me by Second Aunt, now five years gone. It was on the day that I had been given in Sonship to beautiful Kwan Yin, the Goddess of Mercy. I had been a sickly child, and my mother had prayed to the goddess, and had named me in her presence, and had asked for me her mothering protection and fostering care. Perhaps my cousin also had been devoted to Kwan Yin? Perhaps we were both children of the Divine Mother? Surely, it was Second Aunt who had given both rings, and surely it was for the one reason, and surely we were for each other...After some minutes of close examination, I replaced the ring in its red leather box.

I went to the kitchen and asked the cook for two eggs.

"What for?" she questioned.

"To make fire-fly lanterns," I answered.

"Oh ho!" she jested, "I know! I know!"

"What do you know? You know nothing!"

I was provoked, fearing she had discerned my secret. The whole world was too small for me! I could have nothing that I desired. Even the cook had the right to interfere in my affairs!

I left the kitchen with the eggs, but I could not but overhear the cook's laugh, as she joked with the kitchen-maid: "Fire-fly lanterns! For younger cousin Yu Lian!"

Delightful! At least, I had learned my girl cousin's name! This knowledge added immense richness to my idealization of her.

"Yu Lian!" I mused the name with pleasantness, thinking all the while of its meaning. "Yu Lian! What name can better suit her sweet form? Lotus of Jade! But she is far more lovely than even her name signifies . . . more lovely, yes, more lovely than the jade-green Foam Flower in the clear pool!"

The whole house was upset for the celebration of the arrival of our rare and dear and honourable guests. All conversation, al]

thinking, all work was concerned with them, and only them. My two elder sisters were recalled from their school in the rear apartment. One of them took the place of Mother as mistress of the household, so that my mother could give herself wholly to the entertainment of my aunt. The other was appointed hostess of our Younger Cousin, and the two were speedily at play. As for me, I was carefully instructed not to go near them. "Go see our teacher in the rear apartment," First Elder Sister suggested. Then all left me.

The banquet of welcome was in preparation. Our best china was brought forth -- china which commanded high respect in our house, for it was a portion of Mother's dowry, and had been given her by her Fourth Uncle who had obtained it while he was Imperial Examiner of the Province of Kiangsi, and it is in Kiangsi that the finest china of the Middle Kingdom is produced. Then Laurel Blossom Tea was brewed. Laurel blossoms are the annual product of the two laurel-trees in our garden, but the tea-leaves came from far-away Hangchow. Of course, the ivory chopsticks also appeared. They are for all rare occasions.

But in all the excitement I was left unheeded. The servants were whispering, but when I approached they ceased at once, and smiled at one another knowingly. This irritated me. I hid myself in my bedroom. I did not wish to see any one. It was then that I accidentally discovered that something had been left, quite in plain sight, since I had come to examine my neck-ring and see if it truly were a mate for the "Long Life" at the neck of my lovely Younger Cousin. There it was, a packet in bright paper, with my name clearly written upon it. I picked it up, and carefully untied the golden thread and folded out the scarlet wrappings. There within was the Gift of the First Presentation. First, an ink-grinder of chrysanthemum stone, and the case within which it was set was of palisander wood beautifully carved with the nebulous curves of the Cloud Pattern, and second there was a cloisonné ink-holder, blue with the Heron-and-Lotus design which means that its owner shall be a sage fisher after wise thoughts in the pool bright with the Flower of the Good Man. For ours had always been a family proud of its scholars and poets. I knew very well that these treasures were from Third Aunt. I had been shown into her presence for the first time, and here were her Good Fortune greetings to me.

"Ching-yi!" A familiar voice came from behind me. I turned to see my chum Hwa-yuan. "Can you guess why your aunt is paying her visit to your mother?"

"Why is it?" I asked indifferently. "I don't know."

"It is a secret. I won't tell you. I am not expected to tell

any one." His manner was that of a merchant of precious goods, which, as a matter of fact, he would sell most cheaply. I was, therefore, not discouraged.

"A secret! Come, tell me! I have always told you what I have heard. Come, tell! Please!"

"Well, you must not disclose that you have learned it from me. And you must not blush."

"What is it? I won't do anything of that sort, you may be sure. The Thunder God blow me if I do!" I began to be impatient.

"It is about yourself," he said in a low voice. "Have you seen your dear Cousin Yu Lian? It is about her, too." He took on a jesting manner: "O child! I heard my sisters say that she is the prettiest girl in the world! She used to go to the new school, and was the best student of all! Her calligraphy is even superior to that of your Second Elder-Brother. What luck! Ochild!... But I must be going. Elder-Sister sent me to borrow some brush-case patterns for embroidery. She is waiting."

I had been embarrassed while Hwa-yuan was talking. Now that he was gone I rejoiced. I felt that I should blush to see any one in the house. I wished to be alone. So I pretended to be reading a book, there in my bedroom.

Supper was over. Day embraced Night. Frogs began their Hastening-the-Farmers-to-Work song, which is always theirs when spring breaks and the rice-fields call for labour. The moon was yet behind the Eastern Hill. But the fire-flies were already abroad, wandering, wandering, and flecking the dusk with their momentary glows.

Equipped with a bulrush fan, I went out to the Drying-Rice Field, and there I caught many fire-flies. One by one I put them into the shells of the two eggs, from which the original contents had been drained through a tiny hole. With my take of flies I return to my room. There, carefully, I hang the fragile fire-fly cages by silken threads, each to an ivory curtain-hook of my bed. Within their narrowed universes the fire-flies show their glories, They are perfect little lanterns. In my heart I dedicate one of them to my Younger Cousin Yu Lian. "Lotus of Jade," I think. "How lovely is her name!" Rejoicing, I look out into the dusk. I can hear faintly the trickle and tinkle of the stream that courses at the foot of the bamboo grove. There is a pool there for the Foam Flower, and some day -- how soon ! -- we two shall be watching the lacy fins in the clear waters...

The Moon looks in through the window. He has just peeped over the Eastern Hill. I am inspired! And down I kneel with the Gift of the First Presentation upheld with both hands.

"Good Old Man, Moon," I cry. "Be kind to us on this Earth! It is you who can see true hearts of true lovers! Through you they become happy! O Wise-man Moon! If you see that my heart and the heart of my Heart's Man are true, do spin for us a red silken thread, to bind our feet together, that we may love for ever! Every day I will burn incense, every day I will koto to you, every day while I live! Be kind to us on Earth!"

I kotoed many times before I arose.

I was in the Flowery Land. There I saw Younger Cousin Yu Lian, at a little distance. She was reaching up her lily hand -- still wearing the jade-green bracelet -- about to tie a poem to a branch of blossoming peach-tree. The poem was very beautiful; it was written in the most exquisite calligraphy. In my heart I knew that it must be a love-poem...

Boldly I advanced my steps. Her name . . . "Lotus of Jade"

. it was all but spoken...But when I came to the place where she had been... .

It is only in their own world, within the water, that the Foam Flower are truly beautiful...Their life is there... .

"Ching-yii, Ching-yii!"

It was my mother's voice. I rubbed my eyes as the morning sun looked in upon me.

DELANCEY STREET OVERTURE BY DON LOCHBILER

this glass, these claws of crystal shafts
now broken in an earthy urn, parting
under the metal paths of wind, tasselled
and slender on the twining leash each ray
each stalk confining endless sheaves
before the tangled strokes and shreds

of wind in grass
and dust of spiral staves

in curving legs confusing wire of twigs
hollow and glass of tracking eyed
and grey familiar flies and sharpened fins
of gleaming path and wing

A GRAVE IN DORSET

BY LLEWELYN POWYS

THERE before us, extended in all their noonday majesty, rose the great headlands of the Dorset coast, Bat's Head, Swyre Head, Hamboro Tout, lying one behind the other even as far as where the misty upland lawns of St Aldhelm's Head stretched out into the channel. All was mute. As far as eye could scan no movement was visible on the flanks of those wild hills, Unresponsive, unmoved, their monstrous furze-covered slopes confronted our frightened eyes. Spurred forward by our anxiety we climbed each of the great hills which as they approach the sea break into clear, chalk cliffs, blank and perpendicular. From an altitude of five hundred feet our eyes traced the musical curves of the deserted beaches below, and then, in what seemed but a moment of time, we were ourselves moving forward over those bright sea-banks of shingle. Under the smugglers' chain we discovered the indentations of footsteps. It was high tide. Could it be that during the interval that had passed since he entered the sea the encroaching water had carried away his clothes?

Back we went. By the time we had reached the second burial mound the sun was sinking towards Hardy's monument in the west. Already the cormorants with black necks outstretched were with swift deliberation flying round the White Nose to their nesting places. Could not He who taught these birds their natural forgetful knowledge lighten our darkness also? With weary tread we made our way to the fisherman who lives in his thatched cottage two miles westward from the White Nose and asked him to row his boat along under those promontories already in the on-coming darkness proffering the night-time pallor of their faces to the sea. We watched the small craft till it was out of sight, but two hours later it returned; its labour had been in vain.

Then darkness gathered over the hills and stretched herself in the hollows of the valleys and the stars came out and the little owl settling on the post where the rusty barbed-wire ends called to its mate. We entered our empty house. Surely, we thought, he might even yet come back, come home as a lost cat comes home beyond all expectation. We entered his room. All his worldly possessions remained in their places in the same meticulous order

as he had left them.

At that time of the year the glow of twilight is so soon replaced by the first wanness of the morning that the small hours of our midnight watch, with the door of our kitchen left ajar, were soon past. Once again we were out on the headlands overlooking a sea, white and colourless as a hempen shroud. It was then in the stillness of that hour before dawn that we saw a most uncommon thing. Away to the right where the under-cliff, overgrown with privet and wind-bent elder-trees, breaks down to the beach there appeared against some protruding chalk rocks two animals following one behind the other -- badgers returning to their earth! No sight could have brought more sharply to our tormented minds the indifference, the unconcern of the natural world to our trouble. Our brows were bathed by cool sea-weed-smelling airs and on all sides we knew there was taking place unarrested the development of new life. Doe-rabbits in a thousand darkened tunnels were bringing to birth, were nurturing their blind and naked offspring; in a hundred snug "forms" hares were suckling their leverets; the young ravens in their nest on the samphire-grown ledges of the Durdle-door were calling to their dark mother for meat. Already the peregrine falcon had killed its prey, already the sly, sturdy adder had emerged from its retreat to an open place where the sun could warm its compact scales. On all sides the tireless urge of life was manifesting itself. This morning, so intense to us, by others was judged as ordinary.

Again we watched the fisherman navigating his boat over the water. He approached West Bottom. He disappeared behind the Fountain Rock. Why did he delay so long in the sheltered water under the four-square single pillar of chalk, taller and more massive than any that ever supported Acropolis or Cathedral? Had he found the one for whom we were looking, the one we loved, down there in that pool that could only be reached by sea? We waited. Still we waited. Would the boat never come into sight again? I knew the transparent pool well with its weed-covered rocks. In the storms of winter no place along the coast was capable of presenting an aspect more formidable. At such a time it seemed a haven forgotten, abandoned to its own deserted and desolate fury. In summer weather all this was changed. It was here that the foolish guillemots gathered to nest, becking at each other in lofty crevices or fluttering out to sea, in circles, only to return with legs astraddle to their stained platforms.

Out into the open the boat once more came. Surely it was manned by two now, where before there had been but one. And why was the face of this other white as chalk? Far distant as | was, the dead head of our friend was clearly visible. With unshriven spirits we hurried down the precipitous path to where we knew the boat could come into shore. This then was the hearse of

our wanderer, this his carriage of death. The broad oars creaked in their rowlocks; the unbailed water at the bottom of the boat washed to and fro with the gentle heaving of the sea, and there in the stern he lay, a steersman who had no need of a tiller. Though he had fallen from the top of the cliff his beauty remained unmarred. In death as in life his lips still wore their expression of unoffending pride, of unapproachable chastity. His grey flannel trousers were torn as those of a boy's might be torn who had fallen on a hard road. Through the rent a white knee-cap protruded, familiar and reassuring in shape and appearance. We touched it. We clasped his hand, that hand whose aristocratic fingers were trailing in the water. Was this then the hand, this unliving, pale hand from which all blood had been withdrawn, that had broken bread, cast stones, wielded axes, and caressed the soft cheeks of those sad, bereft ones who had so loved him? Could he not speak to us, tell us what had happened, blame his slippery shoes, explain that he was only looking over when that ill-omened boulder gave way hurling him to a violent death? Alas, the death-parting had been made and never again would we hear his protesting laugh, never again be taught gentleness by his unassuming ways.

As we climbed back up the path the memory of him blinded us. All that had happened during the past few hours came back to our memory ; we recalled the sensitive, almost guilty look he had worn when we came upon him suddenly outside Judge Jeffrey's house in Dorchester and he thought he had kept us waiting; remembered the consideration he had shown to us, his self-effacement, his solitary humour. "I have three hours," he had said. Could one of those premonitions felt, so it is rumoured, by those about to die, have prompted him to speak thus plainly? His watch was stopped at a quarter to one o'clock and from where he fell he was exactly fifteen minutes from our cottage on the White Nose. He fell a little to the east of the Fountain Rock, near a fox's hole, near where a clump of elder-trees grow. And what a monument Fate had prepared for him! Here, indeed, was a cenotaph! With bowed heads we stood by the side of that mighty bastion ribbed with flint. If the neck of the one we loved was to be broken it was well that it should be done here where the jack-daws like damned souls glide with the swiftness of javelins, better far here, in one single moment of desperate consciousness, where the herring gulls never cease from crying, better, in such a place, and at such an hour, than in the gambling dens of New York, for there was not one of us, not one of his friends and lovers, who did not feel assured in their hearts that no old man's grave was to be his.

Seldom does a priest cross the threshold of my door, but, as chance would have it now, my cousin from over the seas stood knocking, as the young men who carried our dead opened our garden gate. How welcome in our house of mourning was the beloved monk bringing with him all the consolation that the

ancient pieties could give. With eyes that saw not, with ears that heard not, with lips that uttered no word, the young man lay before us in all his august dignity. I tried to stamp for ever upon my mind the beauty of that proud, fallen head.

Three days later we followed the farm wagon which carried his coffin, down to the churchyard of East Chaldon. Along grassy tracks by the edge of cornfields and down through wide, silent valleys, where the horse's hooves were muffled by the soft turf, our way lay, the way of the dead man, and a handful of mourners and four bearers hired from the village. The weather was still gracious. The sun splashed down upon the shadowless slopes and upon the field of mustard that bordered the lane. Immediately before me there trod an aged labourer in a black coat, in a coat black as the feathered back of a crow. From what cupboard had it been taken to do honour to this stranger from a far land, this old coat, with pockets cut after the eighteenth-century manner? With a smell of dusty horse dung rising from the road I looked at the neck of this old man, so deeply wrinkled with "nought and crosses" wrinkles, and thought of his father and his father's father, who had all probably worn this same black braided garment on a hundred such occasions. Wherever a man lives there also is grief. I continued to follow the elm-wood coffin almost hidden under its burden of ladies-smocks, blue-bells, buttercups, pink champions, and "rank fumiter."

Up the path and into the church we carried him, into that village church which still contained within its walls a font cut out of a massive block of stone by Saxon masons, more than a thousand years ago. In such a place the words of the poet could not fall on the ears of the congregation without understanding. "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday; seeing that is past as a watch in the night. Thou turnest man to destruction; again thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men. As soon as thou scatterest them, they are even as a sleep: and fade away suddenly like the grass."

ON EGDON HEATH

BY LOUISE MOULTON

Lonely you think my walk --

Lonely? But no!

For in my buttonhole a stalk,

A stiff, sweet stalk

Of Jerusalem sage

Plucked in the garden where that other sage,
Our Thomas Hardy, dawned upon this age.
Though far upon the windy heath

Alone I go,

I am not lonely -- no,

With that old thatched house beneath,
Rose-wrapped at the corner of the heath,
And in my buttonhole a stalk,

A stiff, sweet stalk

Of sage.

LONDON LETTER

February, 1928

RAYMOND MORTIMER

" A SMALL group of friends who were undergraduates at Cambridge at the beginning of the century came to have an influence on their time which can still hardly be gauged. Among these were the sons of Sir Leslie Stephen, the eminent Victorian biographer and agnostic. The Misses Vanessa and Virginia Stephen, their sisters, lived in London; and their house became the nucleus of the group, when the two brothers and their friends left Cambridge." I am quoting from the seventh volume of Sir Raymond Mortimer's trustworthy if academic *Studies in Twentieth-Century Culture* (Hogarth Press 1960). "The young ladies, who were as remarkable for their beauty as for their intellect, married two of their brothers' friends, Clive Bell and Leonard Woolf, who were to become celebrated, the one as an apostle of contemporary art, a vigorous pamphleteer, a poet, a historian of civilization, and a psychological biographer; the other as an editor, a publisher, and a politician. An important figure in this group was Edward Morgan Forster, novelist, critic, and historian. Perhaps the most influential was Giles Lytton Strachey, who later revolutionized the art of history: he is said to have shown from the first the almost fanatical intransigence in conduct and opinion which marks the leaders of important movements. But the group was always an oligarchy -- fierce mutual criticism was the breath of its existence. Another dominating figure was John Maynard Keynes, the economist and politician, who by his marriage years later with Mme Lopokova, the first dancer of her day, brought leadership in yet another of the arts into this astonishing circle. Duncan Grant,

though not a member of the University, was an early intimate of the group, and so was Roger Fry, though of an older generation of Cambridge men. It thus appears that from one small band of friends have come the subtlest novelists, the most famous economist, the most influential painters, the most distinguished historian, and the liveliest critics of the post-war period in England."

I have preferred to quote from the veteran critic, because my relations with the persons concerned are too close for me to be able to speak of them easily without impertinence. But the name of Bloomsbury is becoming familiar in Berlin, Paris, and, I presume, New York as well as in London, and I think the time has come when a study of the genesis of the group and the character of those who compose it should be made public. I am certainly not the person to do this; but since I am writing a letter I may perhaps take a letter-writer's privileges and put down a few casual comments on what I see around me.

It is impossible to say where Bloomsbury begins, and where it ends. Are the painters, scholars, and journalists of a younger generation to be included? Arthur Waley? Francis Birrell? George Rylands? Douglas Davidson? Are old and intimate friends who have never become entirely imbued with the Bloomsbury spirit? And in fact what exactly is this spirit? I do not dare a definition. But I would place first a belief in Reason, and a conviction that the pursuit of Truth and a contemplation of Beauty are the most important of human activities. Obviously many of Bloomsbury's fiercest enemies might subscribe to this creed. The distinction of the leaders of the group is that they have acted upon it to an extraordinary extent. No subject of conversation has been taboo, no tradition accepted without examination, and no conclusion evaded. In a hypocritical society, they have been indecent; in a conservative society, curious; in a gentlemanly society, ruthless; and in a fighting society, pacifist. They have been passionate in their devotion to what they thought good, brutal in their rejection of what they thought second rate; resolute in their refusal to compromise. "Narrow in their tastes, loose in their view of morals, irreverent, unpatriotic, remote, and superior," their enemies say. And, I think, truly. For will not relentless reasoning and delicate discrimination make a man all these things?

Such vivid personalities as the leaders of the group could never of course commit themselves to any corporate doctrine of taste. But they have tended to exalt the classical in all the Arts: Racine, Milton, Poussin, Cézanne, Mozart, and Jane Austen have been their more cherished artists. Already the signs of a romantic revival are everywhere perceptible. The next generation is likely to react vigorously against the intellectualism of Bloomsbury. The younger French care as little for Voltaire as they do for Anatole France. Keyserling and Maurras, Chesterton and Lawrence, are united in

their hatred of intellectualism. Indeed Monsieur Julien Benda seems almost the only important figure on the Continent whose views are akin to Bloomsbury's. But here anti-intellectualism has not yet found a champion adequately armed.

Obviously there is a romantic poet in Mrs Woolf, a mystic in Mr E. M. Forster, whereas Mr Strachey, for all his appreciation of Blake and Beddoes, remains in his outlook almost a contemporary of Voltaire. But compare these three writers with any outside the group, great Edwardians like Wells and Bennett, for instance, and a certain consonance in the Bloomsbury artists becomes, I think, apparent. For one thing they remain singularly unspotted by the world; too disillusioned to expect that their scale of values can ever command general assent. (Perhaps the fact that they almost all possessed small independent incomes gave them an initial advantage over many of their rivals.) The east wind of Cambridge philosophy braces their nerves. Pragmatism, Bergsonism, Oxford idealism, wither beneath it. And the historian of Bloomsbury will have to discuss the enormous influence on the group of George Moore, the author not of *The Book Kerith* but of *Principia Ethica*.

Why Bloomsbury? someone who does not know London may ask. It was Mrs Desmond MacCarthy, the author of *A Nineteenth Century Childhood* (she and her husband have always been intimate with the group) who, I believe, first gave it this name from the quarter of London where most of its members lived. It is a quarter honeycombed with spacious squares, where houses built for the gentry in the eighteenth century declined later into boarding-houses for impoverished foreigners and students at the University of London. The houses are for the most part still too big to be inhabited by single families, but the quarter is replacing Chelsea as the home of painters and writers. On summer evenings there is tennis on the lawns, and the Vicar's daughters can be seen playing with the bigwigs, ignorant of the dangerous company they keep. Around are figures reading and talking, and as night falls, the mourning veils in which London soot has dressed the Georgian facades become unnoticeable, and in these gardens you may fancy yourself in the precincts of a college. The passing of a quarter of a century is forgotten, the quick exchanges and curious conjectures, the vehement arguments, remake the past; and the commercial traveller arriving late at St Pancras' from the north, catches a glimpse as he passes of an unfamiliar and unhurrying London, of

'groups under the dreaming garden-trees,
And the full moon, and the white evening star. '

BRIEFER MENTION

The Last Post, by Ford Madox Ford (12mo, 285 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$2.50) is the final volume in the series which began with *Some Do Not and No More Parades*. It seemed when *A Man Could Stand Up* appeared that it was passage work, a transition to the final novel; it turns out that the series ended better with the third. From the preface we judge that it was intended to end there for the book was written only because a woman novelist (Isabel Paterson) wanted to know "what became of Tietjens." It was an unnecessary curiosity and Mr Ford has answered it in an uninspired way. The centre of interest shifts in this book to Tietjens' brother and no amount of explanation of the inner meaning of the series will condone that shift. Apart from this, the technical feat in the final volume is exceptional, and leaves a sense of fruitlessness; the vine was forced and refused to bear. To those who cared only moderately for the first two books, this will not seem important. They will suffer more who held them to be among the few fine novels of our time.

Yellow Gentians And Blue, by Zona Gale (12mo, 188 pages; Appleton: \$2). These stories belong to the same genre as those in *Winesburg, Ohio*. They are more foreshortened, more compact, and perhaps more deft, but Miss Gale lacks Mr Anderson's authentic love of nature and a certain poetic reflectiveness that glimmers through his pages. Both authors are equally betrayed by sentiment and equally sympathetic with the conflicts and misfortunes of obscure and simple people.

Kew Gardens, by Virginia Woolf, with decorations by Vanessa Bell (8vo, 22 pages; Hogarth Press: 15s). A suggestive bit of prose preciousity that drifts, at moments, almost into the Gertrude Stein manner, yet leaves upon the reader a clear impression of a hot afternoon in a park, with echoes of the conversation of passers-by cutting in upon observations of the lazy activities of snails, and other vermin, in the grass. There is no moral, which, paradoxically, may be the moral.

The Life of Tim Healy, by Liam O'Flaherty (8vo, 318 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$3.75) is not biography -- it is a pamphlet against nationalism, imperialism, and clericalism, written with the weary energy of a man who is tired to death of his topics but who has enough physical vitality in him to round off his job somehow. As a pamphlet it is three times too long. Mr Healy appears in the pages only incidentally. When he does appear only one side of his personality is presented. Now Mr Healy is really a very interesting and a very complex personality. On one side of his being he is private-minded, revengeful, foul-mouthed; on another side he has an extraordinary magnanimity, even an extraordinary humility. His eloquence and his piercing wit have sometimes been given to forsaken causes and have been directed against the great powers of the world. Liam O'Flaherty does not seem to have read *Stolen Waters*, that piece of patient research and eloquent statement made on behalf of the unfriended fisher-men of a North of Ireland lake. And his denunciation of mean and evil measures has often been in the great style of oratory -- witness the speech made in the British House of Commons in his attack on the conduct of

the Boer War. It would be a fitting punishment for a man who left goats and sea-gulls and butterflies to write on topics which had no interest for him, if, when he reaches the age of three score years and ten, someone wrote the *Life of Liam O'Flaherty* with the carelessness with which he has written *the Life of Tim Healy*.

Portraits In Color, by Mary White Ovington (10mo, 241 pages; Viking Press: \$2) is a survey of the lives and an estimate of the achievements of twenty contemporary Negroes -- a volume informal and informative, reflecting a justifiable pride yet free from unnecessary racial flourishes. The author has a sure hand in the fashioning of the biographical sketch; her appreciations are in no sense mere journalism. The portraits have been drawn from many fields of attainment; educators, executives, scientists, and artists appear in a notable gallery.

The New American Credo, by George Jean Nathan (12mo, 223 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) consists of 1231 doctrines which Americans are supposed by Mr Nathan to believe. Some they do believe; others some believe; many are not peculiar to Americans; the vast majority of them is probably not believed by the vast majority of Americans. (Proof is lacking either way, but do most Americans believe that a piece of camphor worn on a string round the neck will ward off disease? Statistics are wanted ; also, how many Europeans believe the same thing?) These beliefs are supposed by the author to "constitute the doctrinal body of contemporary American philosophy," but almost any joke in more than a thousand paragraphs becomes tedious.

Aspects of the Novel, by E. M. Forster (12mo, 250 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2.50) approaches its theme with an engaging candour and a persuasive informality, yet embedded in these urbane paragraphs are some of the most profound truths about the writing of fiction which have recently come to light. Mr Forster's analysis of the methods of the novelist lacks the cerebral intensity of Percy Lubbock's study, but it is quite as stimulating. His logic is as inescapable as it is undogmatic, and his judgements are all the wiser for the twinkle which accompanies them.

=====

APRIL

THE DEATH OF SYNGE, AND OTHER PAGES FROM AN OLD DIARY BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

I

WHY does the struggle to come at truth take away our pity,
and the struggle to overcome our passions restore it again?

II

National feeling could be roused again if some man of good education -- if a Catholic, he should have been educated outside Ireland -- gathered about him a few men like himself, and founded a new Nation newspaper, forbidding it all personal attacks, all arguments that assume a base motive in an opponent, and choosing for its national policy, not what seems most desirable in the abstract but such policy as may stir the imagination and yet gather to its support the greatest possible number of educated men. Ireland is ruined by abstractions, and should prefer what may seem a worse policy if it gathers better men. So long as all is ordered for attack, and that alone, leaders will instinctively increase the number of enemies that they may give their followers something to do, and Irish enemies rather than English because they are the more easily injured. The greater the enemy, the greater the hatred and therefore, the greater seems the power. They would give a nation the frenzy of a sect. A sign that this method, powerful in the time of Parnell, no longer satisfies the nation is that parties are drifting into the hands of feebler and more ignorant men.

III

The education of our Irish Secondary Schools, especially the Catholic schools, substitutes pedantry for taste. Men learn the dates of writers, the external facts of masterpieces and not sense of style or feeling for life. I have met no young man out of these schools who has not been injured by the literature and the literary history learned there. The arts have nothing to give but that joy of theirs which is the other side of sorrow, that exhausting contemplation: and in youth before habits have been formed -- unless our teachers be wise men -- we turn from it to pedantry, which opens to the mind a kind of sensual ease. The young Catholic men and women, who have not been through the Secondary Schools, are upon the other hand more imaginative than Protestant boys and girls of the same age. Catholic secondary education destroys, I think, much that the Catholic religion gives. Provincialism destroys the nobility of the Middle Ages.

IV

March 77th.

As I go to and from my bedroom, here at Coole, I pass a wall covered with Augustus John's etchings and drawings. I notice a woman with strongly marked shoulder-blades and a big nose, and

a pencil drawing called Epithalamium. In the Epithalamium an ungainly, ill-grown boy holds out his arms to a tall woman with thin shoulders and a large stomach. Near them is a vivid etching of a woman with the same large stomach and thin shoulders. There is not one of these fifty or sixty clerks and seamstresses and students that has not been broken by labour or wasted by sedentary life. A gymnast would find in all something to amend; and the better he mended the more would those bodies, as with the voice of Diirer, declare that ancient canon discovered in the Greek gymnasium, which, whenever present in painting or in sculpture, shows a compact between the artist and society. John is not interested in the social need, in the perpetual thirst for greater health, but in character, in the revolt from all that makes one man like another. The old art, if carried to its logical conclusion, would have led to the creation of one single type of man, one single type of woman; gathering up by a kind of deification a capacity for all energy and all passion into a Krishna, a Christ, a Dionysus; and at all times a poetical painter, a Botticelli, a Rossetti, creates as his supreme achievement one type of face, known afterwards by his name. The new art can create innumerable personalities, but in each of these the capacity for passion has been sacrificed to some habit of body or of mind. That woman with the big shoulder-blades has, for instance, a nature too keen, too clever for any passion with the cleverness of people who cannot rest, and that young lad with his arms spread out will sink back into disillusionment and exhaustion after the brief pleasure of a passion which is in part curiosity. Some limiting environment or idiosyncrasy is displayed ; man is studied as an individual fact, and not as that energy which seems measureless and hates all that is not itself. It is a powerful but prosaic art, celebrating the "fall into division" not the "resurrection into unity." Did not even Balzac, who looked to the world so often with similar eyes, find it necessary to deny character to his great ladies and young lovers, that he might give them passion? What beautiful woman delights us by her look of character? That shows itself when beauty is gone, being the creation of habit, the bare stalk when the flower of spring has withered. Beauty consumes character with what Patmore calls "the integrity of fire."

It is this lack of the capacity for passion, which makes women dislike the schools of characterization, and makes the modern artist despise woman's judgement. Women, for the same reason, dislike pure comedy. How few women like Molière!

Here at Coole my room is hung with Arundel prints from Botticelli, Benozzo Gozzoli, Giorgione, Mantegna, and the Van Eycks. Here everywhere is the expression of desire, though in the Van Eycks the new interest has begun. All display bodies to please an amorous woman's eyes or the eyes of a great king. The martyrs and saints even must show the capacity for all they have renounced.

V

These notes are morbid, but I heard a man of science say that all progress is at the outset pathological, and I write for my own good.

The pain others give passes away in their later kindness, but that of our own blunders, especially, when they hurt our vanity, never passes away. Our own acts are isolated and one act does not buy absolution for another. They are always present before a strangely abstract judgement. We are never a unity, a personality to ourselves. Small acts of years ago are so painful in the memory that often we start at the presence a little below "the threshold of consciousness" of a thought that remains unknown. It sheds a vague light like that of the moon before it rises, or after its setting. Vanity is so intimately associated with our spiritual identity that whatever hurts it, above all if it came from it, is more painful in the memory than serious sin and yet I do not think it follows that we are very vain. The harm we do to others is lost in changing events and passes away and so is healed by time, unless it was very great. Looking back I find only one offence, which is as painful to me as a hurt to vanity. It was done to a man who died shortly after. Because of his death, it has not been touched by the transforming hand -- tolerant Nature has not rescued it from Justice.

VI

I think that all happiness depends on the energy to assume the mask of some other self; that all joyous or creative life is a re-birth as something not oneself, something which has no memory and is created in a moment and perpetually renewed, a grotesque or solemn painted face, to hide us from the terrors of judgement, an imaginative Saturnalia, where we forget reality, a game like that of a child, where one loses the infinite pain of self-realization. Perhaps all the sins and energies of the world are but its flight from an infinite

blinding beam.

VII

F -- is learning Gaelic. I would sooner see her in the Gaelic movement than in any Irish movement I can think of. I fear some new absorption in political opinion. Women, because the main event of their lives has been giving themselves and giving birth, give all to an opinion as if it were some terrible stone doll. Men take up an opinion lightly and are easily false to it and when faithful keep the habit of many interests. We still see the world, if

we are of strong mind and body, with considerate eyes, but to women opinions become as their children or their sweethearts, and the greater their emotional capacity the more do they forget all other things. They grow cruel, as if in defence of lover or child, and all this is done for "somethingg other than human life." At last the opinion is so much identified with their nature that it seems a part of their flesh becomes stone and passes out of life. It was a part of F -- 's power in the past, that though she made this surrender with her mind, she kept the sweetness of her voice and much humour, and yet I am afraid. Women should have their play with dolls finished in childish happiness, for if they play with them again it is amid hatred and malice.

VIII

Women should find in the mask enough joy to forget the doll without regret. There is always a living face behind the mask.

IX

Last night at The Theatre of Ireland, I talked to the man next to me. "I have been to your theatre also," he said. "I like your popular plays, The Suburban Grove and those plays by the Frenchman, I do not remember his name" (evidently Molière) "but I don't like your mysteries." I thought he meant something of mine, as the word "mystery" is a popular reproach since The Shadowy Waters, but I found he meant Kincora. I said, "Why do you find that mysterious?" He said, "Oh, I know nothing about all that history." I replied, "When I was young every Irish nationalist young man knew as much about Brian Boru as about St Patrick." He thought I was talking of the peasants and said he was afraid that sort of knowledge was dying out amongst them. He evidently thought it their business alone, like the bath and the blessed well.

x

March 23rd.

McDonagh called to-day. Very sad about Ireland. Says that he finds a barrier between himself and the Irish-speaking peasantry, who are "cold, dark, and reticent" and "too polite." He watches the Irish-speaking boys at his school, and when nobody is looking, or when they are alone with the Irish-speaking gardener, they are merry, clever, and talkative. When they meet an English speaker or one who has learned Gaelic, they are stupid. They are a different world. Presently he spoke of his nine years in a monastery

and I asked what it was like. "Oh," he said, "everybody is very simple and happy enough. There is a little jealousy sometimes. If one brother goes into a town with a Superior, another brother is jealous." He then told me that the Bishop of Raphoe had forbidden anybody in his See to contribute to the Gaelic League because its Secretary "has blasphemed against the Holy Adamnan." The Secretary had said, "The Bishop is an enemy, like the founder of his See, St Adamnan, who tried to injure the Gaelic language by writing in Latin." McDonagh says, "Two old countrymen fell out -- and one said, 'I have a brother who will make you behave,' meaning the Bishop of Raphoe, and the other said, 'I have a son who will put sense into you,' meaning Cardinal Logue."

XI

Molly Allgood came to-day to ask where I would be to-morrow, as Synge wishes to send for me if strong enough. He wants "to make arrangements." He is dying. They have ceased to give him food. Should we close the Abbey or keep it open while he still lives? Poor Molly is going through her work as always. Perhaps that is best for her. I feel Synge's coming death less now than when he first became ill. I am used to the thought of it and I do not find that I pity him. I pity her. He is fading out of life. I felt the same when I saw M -- in the madhouse. I pitied his wife. He seemed already dead. One does not feel that death is evil when one meets it -- evil, I mean, for the one who dies. Our Daimon is silent as was that other before the death of Socrates. The wildest sorrow that comes at the thought of death is, I think, "Ages will pass over and no one ever again look at that nobleness or that beauty." What is this but to pity the living and to praise the dead?

XII

March 24th.

Synge is dead. In the early morning he said to the nurse, "It is no use fighting death any longer," and he turned over and died. I called at the hospital this afternoon and asked the assistant matron if he knew he was dying. She answered, "He may have known it for weeks, but he would not have said so to any one. He would have no fuss. He was like that." She added, with emotion in her voice, ""We were devoted to him."

XIII

March 28th.

Mr Stephens, Synge's brother-in-law, said he suffered no pain but only great weakness. On Sunday he questioned the doctor and

convinced himself that he was dying. He told his brother-in-law next day and was quite cheerful, even making jokes. In the evening he saw Molly and told her to be brave and sent her to me that I might arrange about his writings. On the morning when I heard of his death a heavy storm was blowing and I doubt not when he died that it had well begun. That morning Lady Gregory felt a very great depression and was certain that some evil was coming but feared for her grandchild, feared it was going to be ill. On the other hand, my sister, Lolly, said at breakfast, "I think it will be all right with Synge, for last night I saw a galley struggling with a storm and then it shot into calm and bright sunlight and I heard the keel grate on the shore." One remembers the voyages to Tir-nan-oge, certainly the voyages of souls after death to their place of peace.

XIV

I have been looking through his poems and have read once more that on page 21, "I asked if I grew sick and died." Certainly they were there at the funeral his "idiot" enemies: A. who against all regulations rushed up to the dressing-rooms during the Playboy riot to tell the actors they should not have played in so disgraceful a play. B. who has always used his considerable influence with the Company against Synge, and has spoken against him in public; there, too, were the feeble friends who pretended to believe but gave no help. And there was C., whose obituary notice speaks of Synge's work as only important in promise, of the exaggeration of those who praise it, and then claims that its writer (getting the date wrong by two years, however) spent many hours a day with Synge in Paris -- with Synge who was proud and lonely, almost as proud of his old blood as of his genius, and had few friends. There was D. the Secretary of the Society -- it had sent a wreath -- whose animosity had much to do with the attacks in Sinn Fein. It was, to quote E. a funeral "'small but select." A good friend of Synge quoted to me --

"How shall the ritual then be read?
The Requiem how be sung,
By yours the evil eye,
By yours the slanderous tongue,
That did to death the innocence
That died, and died so young?"

Yet these men came, though but in remorse; they saw his plays, though but to dislike; they spoke his name, though but to slander. Well-to-do Ireland never saw his plays nor spoke his name. Was he ever asked to any country-house but Coole? Was he ever asked

to a dinner-party? How often I have wished that he might live long enough to enjoy that communion with idle, charming, and cultivated women which Balzac in one of his dedications calls "the chief consolation of genius."

XV

In Paris Synge once said to me, "We should unite stoicism, asceticism, and ecstasy. Two of them have often come together, but the three never."

XVI

I believe that something I said may have suggested "I asked if I grew sick and died." S. had frequently attacked his work while admitting him a man of genius. He attacked it that he might remain on good terms with the people about him. When Synge was in hospital to be operated upon S. was there too as a patient and I told Synge that whenever I spoke of his illness to any man that man said, "And isn't it sad about S.?" Until I could stand it no longer and burst out with "I hope he will die," and now as someone said I was "being abused all over the town as without heart." I had learned that people were calling continually to enquire how S. was, but hardly anybody called to ask for Synge. Two or three weeks later Synge wrote this poem. Had my words set his mind running on the thought that fools flourish, more especially as I had prophesied that S. would flourish and in my mood at that time it seemed that for S. to be operated on at the same time with Synge was a kind of insolence. S.'s illness did, indeed, win for him so much sympathy that he came out to lucrative and honourable employment, and now when he is playing golf will say with the English accent he has acquired of late to some player who needs a great man's favour, "I know him well, I will say a word in that quarter."

The Irish weekly papers notice Synge's death with short and for the most part grudging notices. There was an obscure Gaelic League singer who was a leader of the demonstration against the Playboy. He died on the same day. Sinn Fein notices both deaths in the same article and gives three-fourths of it to the rioter. For Synge it has but grudging words as was to be expected.

Molly tells me that Synge went to see Stephen McKenna and his wife before going into the hospital and said good-bye with "You will never see me again."

XVII

Celebrations:

I. He was one of those unmoved souls in whom there is a perpetual "Last Day," a perpetual trumpeting and coming up for judgement.

II. He did not speak to men and women, asking judgement, as lesser writers do but knowing himself part of judgement he was silent.

III. We pity the living and not such dead as he. He has gone upward out of his ailing body into the heroical fountains. We are parched by time.

IV. He had the knowledge of his coming death and was cheerful to the end, even joking a little when that end had all but come. He had no need of our sympathies. It was as though we and the things about us died away from him and not he from us.

XVIII

Detractions:

He had that egotism of the man of genius which Nietzsche compares to the egotism of a woman with child. Neither I nor Lady Gregory had ever a compliment from him. After Hyacinth Lady Gregory went home the moment the curtain fell, not waiting for the congratulation of friends, to get his supper ready. He was always ailing and weakly. All he said of the triumphant Hyacinth was, "I expected to like it better." He had under charming and modest manners, in almost all things of life, a complete absorption in his own dream. I have never heard him praise any writer, living or dead, but some old French farce writer. For him nothing existed but his thought. He claimed nothing for it aloud. He never said any of those self-confident things I am enraged into saying, but one knew that he valued nothing else. He was too confident for self-assertion. I once said to George Moore, "Synge has always the better of you, for you have brief but ghastly moments during which you admit the existence of other writers; Synge never has." I do not think he disliked other writers -- they did not exist. One did not think of him as an egotist. He was too sympathetic in the ordinary affairs of life and too simple. In the arts he knew no language but his own.

I have often envied him his absorption as I have envied Verlaine his vice. Can a man of genius make that complete renunciation of the world necessary to the full expression of himself without some vice or some deficiency? You were happy or at least blessed, "blind old man of Scio's rocky isle."

XIX

Two plays last night, *Time*, a play of suggestion, *Cross-roads*, a logical play. I accepted this last play because of its central idea, a seeming superstition of its creator, a promise of a new attitude towards life, of something beyond logic. In the four morning papers *Time* is cursed or ignored and *Cross-roads* given great praise, but praise that is never for the central idea, and the only critic who speaks of that idea misunderstands it completely. State a logical proposition and the most commonplace mind can complete it. Suggestion is richest to the richest and so grows unpopular with a democracy like this. They misunderstood Robinson's idea, luckily for his popularity, and so turned all into commonplace. They allow their minds to dwell so completely on the logic that they do not notice what, as it were swims upon it or juts up from its river bed. That is how they combine religion with a journalism which accepts all the implications of materialism. A thought that stirs me in *Time* is that "only women and great artists love time, others sell it," but what is Blake's "naked beauty displayed," "visible audible wisdom," to the shop-keeping logicians? How can they love time or anything but the day's end?

XxX

To-day Molly told me that Synge often spoke of his coming death, indeed constantly for a year past and tried hard to finish *Deirdre*. Sometimes he would get very despondent, thinking he could not finish it and then she would act it for him and he would write a little more, and then he would despond again, and so the acting would begin again.

My sister, Lily, says that the ship Lolly saw on the night of Synge's death was not like a real ship, but like the *Shadowy Waters* ship on the Abbey stage, a sort of allegorical thing. There was also a girl in a bright dress, but she seemed to vanish as the ship ran ashore; all about the girl, and indeed everything, was broken and confused until the bow touched the shore in bright sunlight.

XXI

I see that between *Time*, suggestion, and *Cross-roads*, logic, lies a difference of civilization, the literature of suggestion belongs to a social order when life conquered by being itself and the most living

was the most powerful, and not to a social order founded upon argument. Leisure, wealth, privilege were created to be a soil for the most living. The literature of logic, most powerful and the most empty, conquering all in the service of one metallic premise, is for those who have forgotten everything but books and yet have only just learnt to read. They fill their minds with deductions, as they fill their empty houses, where there is nothing of the past, with machine-made furniture. I used to think that the French and Irish democracies follow, as John O'Leary used to say, a logical deduction to its end, no matter what suffering it brings, from a resemblance in the blood. I now believe that they do this because they have broken from the past, from the self-evident truths, from "naked beauty displayed." The English logicians may be as ignorant but they are timid.

Robinson should become a celebrated dramatist if this theatre lasts long enough. He does not argue like the imitators of Ibsen, though his expression of life is as logical, hence his grasp on active passion. Passion is logical when bent on action and in the drama of suggestion there must be sufficient loosening and slackening for meditation and the seemingly irrelevant or else a Greek chorus, and neither is possible without rich leisurely minds in the audience, lovers of Father Time, men who understand Faust's last cry to the passing moment.

Florence Farr once said to me, "If we could say to ourselves, with sincerity, that this passing moment is as good as any I shall ever know, we would die upon the instant, or be united to God." Desire would have ceased and logic the feet of desire.

XXII

April 5th.

Walked home from Gurteen Dhas with D. And have walked through the brick kilns of Egypt. He states everything in a slightly argumentative form and the soul is starved by the absence of self-evident truth. Good conversation unrolls itself like the spring or like the dawn, and effective argument, mere logical statement, founds itself on the set of facts or of experiences common to two or more. Each hides what is new or rich.

XXIII

The element which in men of action corresponds to style in literature is the moral element. Books live almost entirely because of their style and the men of action, who inspire movements after

they are dead, are those whose hold upon impersonal emotion and law lifts them out of immediate circumstance. Mitchel wrote better prose than Davis, Mangan better poetry, D'Arcy Magee better popular verse, Quintan Lalor saw deeper into a political event, O'Connell had more power and Meager more eloquence, but Davis alone has influenced generations of young men, though Mitchel's narrower and more faulty nature has now and again competed with him. Davis showed this moral element not merely in his verse -- I doubt if that could have had great effect alone -- but in his action, in his defence for instance of the rights of his political opponents of the Royal Irish Academy. His verses were but an illustration of principles shown in action. Men are dominated by self-conquest ; thought that is a little obvious or platitudinous if merely written, becomes persuasive, immortal even, if held to amid the hurry of events. The self-conquest of the writer, who is not a man of action, is style. Mitchel's influence is mainly, though not altogether, that of a writer, the influence of style, that also a form of power, an energy of life. It is curious that Mitchel's long martyred life, supported by style, has had less force than that of a man who died at thirty, was never in the hulks, did not write very well, and achieved no change of the law.

The act of appreciation of any great thing is an act of self-conquest. This is one reason why we distrust the serene moralist who has not approved his principles in some crisis. He would be troubled, broken even, if he had made that conquest. Yet the man who has proved himself in a crisis may be serene in words, for his battle was not in contemplation where words are combatants.

XXIV

Last night my sister told me that this book of Synge's (his poems) was the only book they began to print on a Friday. They tried to avoid this but could not, and it is not at all well printed. Do all they could, it would not come right.

XXV

Molly Allgood has just told me of three pre-visions. Some years ago, when the Company were in England on that six weeks' tour, she, Synge, and D. were sitting in a tea-shop, she was looking at Synge, and suddenly the flesh seemed to fall from his face and she saw but a skull. She told him this and it gave him a great shock, and since then she had not allowed images to form before her eyes of themselves, as they often used to do. Synge was well at the

time. Again last year, but before the operation and at a time when she had no fear, she dreamed that she saw him in a coffin being lowered into a grave and a "strange sort of cross" was laid over the coffin. (The Company sent a cross of flowers to his funeral and it was laid upon the grave.) She told this also to Synge and he was troubled by it. Then some time after the operation she dreamed that she saw him in a boat. She was on the shore, and he waved his hand to her and the boat went away. She longed to go to him but could not.

XXVI

March rith.

Stratford-on-Avon

Some weeks ago A -- wrote to me that it was a phase of B -- 's madness to believe himself in heaven. All the great poets of other times were there, and he was helping to prepare for the reception of Swinburne. The angels were to stand in groups of three. And now I have just heard that Swinburne is dead.

XXVII

Dined with F -- and G -- . F -- spoke of the grief Synge's death gave him -- the ending of all that work. We talked of the disordered and broken lives of modern men of genius and the so different lives of the Italian painters. He said in those days men of genius were cared for, but now the strain of life is too heavy, no one thinks of them till some misfortune comes -- madness or death. He then spoke, as he often does, of the lack of any necessary place for the arts in modern life and said, "After all, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel was the Pope's ceiling." Later he said in comment upon some irascible act of Hugh Lane's, "Everybody who is doing anything for the world is very disagreeable, the agreeable people are those for whom the world is doing something."

XXVIII

Our modern public arts, architecture, plays, large decoration, have too many different tastes to please, some taste is sure to dislike and to speak its dislike everywhere, and then because of the silence of the rest, partly from apathy, partly from dislike of controversy, partly from the difficulty of defence, as compared with the ease of attack, there is general timidity. All creation requires one mind to make and one mind of enjoyment. The theatre can at rare moments create this one mind of enjoyment, and once created, it is like the

mind of an individual in solitude, immeasurably bold -- all is possible to it. The only building received with enthusiasm during my time has been the Catholic Cathedral of Westminster -- religion or the politics of religion created that one mind.

XXIX

I asked Molly if any words of hers made Synge write, "I asked if I grew sick and died," and she said, "He used often to joke about death with me and one day he said, "Will you go to my funeral? and I said, 'No, for I could not bear to see you dead and the others living.' "

XXX

Went to S -- 's the other night -- everybody either too tall or too short or crooked or lob-sided. One woman had an excited voice, an intellect without self-possession, and there was a man with a look of a wood-kern, who kept bringing the conversation back and back to Synge's wrong-doing in having made a girl in the Playboy admire a man who had ham-strung mountain yeos. He saw nothing else to object to, but that one thing. He declared that the English would not give Home Rule because they thought Ireland cruel and no Irishman should write a sentence to make them go on thinking that. There arose before my mind an image of this man arguing about Ireland with an endless procession of second-rate men. At last I said, "When a country produces a man of genius he never is what it wants or believes it wants; he is always unlike its idea of itself. In the eighteenth century Scotland believed itself religious, moral, and gloomy, and its national poet Burns came not to speak of these things but to speak of lust and drink and drunken gaiety. Ireland, since the young Irishmen, has given itself up to apologetics. Every impression of life or impulse of imagination has been examined to see if it helped or hurt the glory of Ireland or the political claim of Ireland. A sincere impression of life became at last impossible, all was apologetics. There was no longer an impartial imagination, delighting in whatever is naturally exciting. Synge was the rushing up of the buried fire, an explosion of all that had been denied or refused, a furious impartiality, an indifferent, turbulent sorrow. Like Burns, his work was to say all the people did not want to have said. He was able to do this because Nature had made him incapable of a political idea." The wood-kern made no answer, did not understand a word I said, perhaps, but for the rest of the evening he kept saying to this person or to that person that he objected to nothing but the passage about the mountain yeos.

XXXI

July 8th.

I dreamed this thought two nights ago: "Why should we complain if men illtreat our Muses, when all that they gave to Helen while she still lived was a song and a jest?"

XXXII

September 20th.

An idle man has no thought, a man's work thinks through him. On the other hand a woman gets her thought through the influence of a man. A man is to her what work is to a man. Man is a woman to his work and it begets his thoughts.

XXXIII

The old playwrights took old subjects, did not even arrange the subjects in a new way. They were absorbed in expression, that is to say in what is most near and delicate. The new playwrights invent their subjects and dislike anything customary in the arrangement of the fable, but their expression is as common as the newspapers where they first learned to write.

XXXIV

October.

I saw Hamlet on Saturday night, except for the chief Ophelia scenes, and missed these [for I had to be in the Abbey] without regret. Their pathos, as they are played, has always left me cold. I came back for Hamlet at the graveside: there my delight always begins anew. I feel in Hamlet, as so often in Shakespeare, that I am in the presence of a soul lingering on the storm-beaten threshold of sanctity. Has not that threshold always been terrible, even crime-haunted? Surely Shakespeare, in those last seeming idle years, was no quiet country gentleman, enjoying, as men like Dowden think, the temporal reward of an unvalued toil. Perhaps he sought for wisdom in itself at last, and not in its passionate shadows. Maybe he had passed the threshold, and none the less for Jonson's drinking bout. Certainly one finds here and there in his work praise of country leisure sweetened by wisdom.

XXXV

Am I going against nature in my constant attempt to fill my life with work? Is my mind as rich as in idle days? Is not perhaps the poet's labour a mere rejection? If he seek purity -- the ridding of his life of all but poetry -- will not inspiration come? Can one reach God by toil? He gives himself to the pure in heart. He asks nothing but attention.

XXXVI

I have been looking at Venetian costumes of the sixteenth century as pictured in *The Mask* -- all fantastic; bodily form hidden or disguised; the women with long bodices, the men in stuffed doublets. Life had become so learned and courtly that men and women dressed with no thought of bodily activity. If they still fought and hunted, their imagination was not with these things. Does not the same happen to our passions when we grow contemplative and so liberate them from use? They also become fantastic and create the strange lives of poets and artists.

XXXVII

December 15th.

Deirdre of the Sorrows (first performances). I was anxious about this play and on Thursday both Lady Gregory and I felt the strain of our doubts and fears. Would it seem mere disjointed monotony? Would the second act be intelligible? The audience seemed to like it, and I was greatly moved by certain passages in the last act.. I thought the quarrel on the graveside with its last phrase, "Tt is a pity that we should miss the safety of the grave and we trampling its edge," and Deirdre's cry to the quarrelling Kings, "Move a little further off with the quarrelling of fools," as noble and profound drama as any man has written. On the first night the thought that it was Synge's reverie over death, his own death, made all poignant. "The filth of the grave," "an untidy thing death is, though it is a Queen that dies," and the like, brought him dying before me. I remembered his extreme gentleness in the last weeks, that air of being done with ambition and conflict. Last night the audience was small -- under £10 -- and less alive than the first night. No one spoke of the great passages. Someone thought the quarrel in the last act too harsh. Others picked out those rough peasant words that give salt to his speech, as "of course adding nothing to the dialogue, and very ugly." Others objected to the little things in the costuming of the play, which were intended to echo these words, to vary the heroic convention with something homely or of the fields. Then as I watched the acting, I saw that O'Donovan and Molly were as passionless as the rest. Molly had personal charm, pathos, distinction even, fancy, beauty, but never passion -- never intensity; nothing out of a brooding mind. All was but observation, curiosity, desire to please. Her foot never

touched the unchanging rock, the secret place beyond life; her talent showed like that of all the others, social, modern, a faculty of comedy. Pathos she has, the nearest to tragedy the comedian can come, for that is conscious of our presence and would have our pity. Passion she has not, for that looks beyond mankind and asks no pity, not even of God. It realizes, substantiates, attains, scorns, governs and is most mighty when it passes from our sight.

XXXVIII

December 6th.

Last night Molly had so much improved that I thought she may have tragic power. The lack of power and of clarity which I still find among great charm and distinction, comes more from lack of construction, through lack of reflection and experience, than from mere lack of emotion. There are passages where she attempts nothing, or where she allows herself little external comedy impulses, more I now think because they are habitual than because she could not bring emotion out of herself. The chief failure is towards the end. She does not show immediately after the death of Naise enough sense of what has happened, enough normal despair to permit of a gradual development into the wild unearthly feeling of the last speeches, though these last speeches are exquisitely spoken. My unfavourable impression of Friday came in part from the audience which was heavy and, I thought, bored. Yesterday the audience -- the pit entirely full -- was enthusiastic and moved, raising once again my hope for the theatre and for the movement.

XXXIX

May 25th.

At Stratford-on-Avon The Playboy shocked a good many people, because it was a self-improving, self-educating audience, and that means a perverted and commonplace audience. If you set out to educate yourself you are compelled to have an ideal, a model of what you would be; and if you are not a man of genius, your model will be a commonplace and prevent the natural impulses of the mind, its natural reverence, desire, hope, admiration, always half unconscious, almost bodily. That is why a simple round of religious duties, things that escape the intellect, is often so much better than its substitute, self-improvement.

XL

September 8th.

S. S. Zeeland

I noticed in the train, as I came to Queenstown, a silent fairly

well-dressed man, who struck me as vulgar. It was not his face, which was quite normal, but his movements. He moved from his head only. His arm and hand, let us say, moved in direct obedience to the head, had not the instinctive motion that comes from a feeling of weight, of the shape of an object to be touched or grasped. There were too many straight lines in gesture and in pose. The result was an impression of vulgar smartness, a defiance of what is profound and old and simple. I have noticed that beginners sometimes move this way on the stage. They, if told to pick up something, show by the movement of their body that their idea of doing it is more vivid than the doing of it. One gets an impression of thinness in the nature. I am watching Miss V -- to find out if her inanimate movements when on the stage come from lack of experience or if she has them in life. I watched her sinking into a chair the other day to see if her body felt the size and shape of the chair before she reached it. If her body does not so feel she will never be able to act, just as she will never have grace of movement in ordinary life. As I write I see through the cabin door a woman feeding a child with a spoon. She thinks of nothing but the child and every movement is full of expression. It would be beautiful acting. Upon the other hand, her talk -- she is talking to someone next her -- in which she is not interested, is monotonous and thin in cadence. It is a mere purpose in the brain, made necessary by politeness.

XLI

October.

A good writer should be so simple that he has no faults, only sins.

TWO POEMS

BY W. W. E. ROSS

I

SOLDIERY

Marching the men
soldiers going along with drums
over the earth, over the earth

to kill yet

is the air

sweet and clear

the sun rides and the wind glides

they
with keen blades go
marching marching

over the earth

while the sun rides
and the wind glides

II

In the ravine I stood
and watched the snowflakes
falling into the stream

into the stream
flowing gracefully between
banks of snow

The black water

of the winter creek came
around a bend above
and disappeared
around a bend below

Filled with melted snow
to the brim

the creek came
around a bend --

and disappeared below
around a bend --

ground covered with snow

Thus I stood the snow
descended by degrees
into the stream

into the stream

THE BARREN TREE

BY HAROLD LEWIS COOK

I come to you as the sunlight
Comes to a tree,

As a blue wave rolling shoreward
From the mid-sea.

But you are secret as a tree deep-hidden
In a dark cloud.

And you are rock whereon the perfect wave
Must cry aloud,

Broken, must fall, fall sighing, sink
Back into ocean.

About you there may be no surge of light
Nor any motion.

No bird calls from your branches to any bird:
No stretched wing there

To scatter sunlight from its pointed plumes.
The tree stands bare.

OF TUNG-TING LAKE I AM REMINDED

BY KWEI CHEN

Alone I sit by the lakeside,

By the side of Mendota, bright with illusion.

I gaze at the curves of the distant hills;

I listen to the many-coloured sounds; it is spring.

In the neighbouring wood they are chanting,

Birds and colours, on boughs yet hung with last year's leaves;
Not too slow, not hasting -- birds, in their several kinds.
They do not sing to please my ear; yet all is pleasantness.

The pure water, the very clear water, the pearl water,
Striking against the rock -- the grey, bull-neck rock.
The sound is like the dong of the jade-bell --

Or is it rain on the bamboo tile of the Sage's hut?

From beyond the thicket under the large poplar --

The morning sun gleams there, the Great Sun of morning! --
There I hear delicate voices, and at times laughter;

But no wraith of human folk do I see.

On the waves, riding forth, a pair of ducks!

Often I watched them on Tung-Ting Lake, often!

They rise; they fall with the wave, free and content --
Even away from their kind -- yet they two never separate.

Alone I sit by the lakeside,

By the side of Mendota, bright with illusion.

I gaze at the curves of the distant hills;

I listen...On Tung-Ting Lake, also, it is spring!

THE MUSIC TEACHER

BY ELSA WEIHL

IT was raining, so she stopped on the verandah to pull off her overshoes before ringing the bell. It wouldn't do to ring the bell first and keep a servant waiting while she struggled with her rubbers. The ends of her cotton gloves were thick, so she fumbled -- and her hand-bag and music roll kept slipping -- she had to lay them down in the end.

She had been giving piano lessons for twenty-five years. If she could have had a studio of her own! Going from house to house was dreadful, but parents wanted the children taught at home, it saved time -- their time. Her pupils were too scattered, but she was glad to get any one she could. The last lesson had been in a neighbouring suburb, thirty-five minutes' travel by trolley. At best she could give four lessons in an afternoon. Four dollars -- if none of them were sick. She didn't charge for lessons if the children were sick. And, naturally, if they went out of town she couldn't charge either. If only she could count on their keeping up, all of them, until the middle of June -- it would tide her over the summer vacation. Most of them wanted to stop in May. The Rawlings hadn't paid last term's bill. But she mustn't press them, people didn't like to be dunned. And it would be so awkward. Besides, they might stop Jimmy's lessons!

Off at last. She rang the bell. How dismal everything was, and go cold. She shivered a little, wishing she had worn a sweater under her coat. The rain was making pulp of the sodden lawn, leaving pools in the little hollows of the cement path, seeping through the gravel in the driveway. There was a smell of earth and leaf-mould; her umbrella was wet, she had better leave it outside. She hoped no one would steal it.

The door opened. A maid in a black dress, white apron and cap, stood stolidly, giving no response to her smile.

"Will you tell Edith her teacher is here?"

The maid walked slowly down the wide hall to the stairway, her feet sinking into the pile of a rose-coloured Turkish rug. There was protest in every line of the square, angular figure as it mounted the stairs...

The music teacher stood, waiting. Should she take off her coat? It was wet, and if she laid it across a chair it might leave a mark. The maid should have taken it from her, but poor thing -- no education -- and likely not intelligent to begin with. Servants were not what they had been in her own home, years ago. -- It would be nice to sit down, after walking the length of Riverview Road. It was a wonderful location for a house if you had an automobile. She wished Edith would hurry -- she would be late for her next lesson.

Upstairs there was a sudden slam and a child's voice exclaimed, "Oh bother! I have to wash my hands."

And then, drifting from another room, "You might as well change your dress, Edith. Then you'll be ready to go with me to meet your father."

"Oh goody!" Then the child called back, "But Miss Selina is waiting!"

"Let her wait -- "

The rich drawling tones, indifferent, unhurried -- not loud, but resonant -- filled the hall, floating down the stairs to the teacher's ears, "Let her wait -- " "Let her wait!" "Let her wait!!"

Blood pounded in her veins, roared in her ears. Turkish rugs! Venetian glass! A console table! Jade paper-weight! Bronze andirons! She wanted to tear something -- anything --

" "Let her wait -- ' The insolence of that voice. I won't teach the child. So stupid, she can't understand the simplest explanation, with fat, spineless fingers that bend and collapse on the keys! How can she develop a technique with such hands! I'll say, "Your child's too stupid to learn!" "

She began to tremble, her hands worked nervously in her damp cotton gloves. "I won't wait. Milly Carson. Joe Carson's wife. Nobody would look at her if she hadn't all that money. With no brains to teach anything, herself -- and insolent to those who have."

But two dollars a week. Two dollars a week less.

Last month Mrs Robbins had said that Anne wouldn't be taking any more lessons, she had too much school work. But Anne was taking lessons the very next week, at the Conservatory.

She wasn't getting any new pupils. Fifty years old! Not old, but if you wanted to save -- you couldn't afford to take chances --

Her heart beat loud, like a metronome. You could almost hear it. The house was very still now.

She pulled off her gloves slowly, and tugged at the buttons on her coat. "It's hot in the house after being outside."

Edith came in, dragging her feet. "I couldn't practise very much since Thursday," she said. "Friday I was sick, and Saturday -- "

"Very well; we'll do the best we can." They sat down on the piano bench. "I've brought you a new piece, Spring Blossoms. You'll love it. But first we must have the exercises. One-and-two-and-three-and -- the middle of the key -- hit the middle. Now, staccato! No, you were playing it /egato -- no, this way."

She moved to the middle of the bench, her thin arms in line with

the keys, fingers accurately crooked. "Now raise your thumbs, like this -- hands slightly tilted outward -- now you do it. That's better. Fine!"

HANG FU

BY ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

Tick-tock, tick-tock,

Goes the clock of the rain in the eaves,

Long are the hours of the rain and the moon is hidden,

I would get up, I would put on my robe with silver sleeves,

And creeping through a whining door, bridle my horse with a silver
bridle,

And ride out under the softly dripping leaves.

But the rain holds me in a monotonous net of sound,

Tick-tock, tick-tock,

I will to go and I do not will it,

And the opportunity passes as others pass, and the hours pass and
are drowned,

And the moon will go down and the sun will rise with wet locks

But there will be no mark of my horse in the teeming ground.

HEMINGWAY WHISTLES IN THE DARK

Men Without Women. By Ernest Hemingway.
r2mo. 232 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.

Book review by N. L. ROTHMAN

UNLESS I am very much mistaken, there is a good deal in
the writing of Ernest Hemingway that is being overlooked,

in the general commotion over his splendid technique. It seems to be the same penalty that men pay for writing in some startling, new fashion. The brilliance of the originality of expression so dazzles the eyes of the beholders that they see nothing of the source of the brilliance; they forget that the source of light is most often heat. One might easily suggest that this is at the bottom of most literary débâcles, for the audience for literary novelties is notoriously fickle, and rushes from author to author with the alacrity of the proverbial bee. Who lives by his style must perish by another's. The fault lies with the spectators. They fail to see, as I have suggested, beyond the immediacy of an interesting presentation, and brand the writer with their own superficiality. It was from the critics that we learned that Ring Lardner was something besides funny, and that Scott Fitzgerald was more than historian of the jazz generation. More unfortunate, Michael Arlen has perished by his own charm. This is not the place to expostulate about Arlen's literary fate, for I am concerned now with the opposite end of literary style, one as brusque as Arlen is suave -- as objective as Arlen is subjective.

The reviews of Hemingway's work have been profuse and enthusiastic. There are multitudinous references to his "hard, athletic style," his "clean, masculine prose," his modern economy of detail, his classic detachment from his characters. This compendium of tribute to Hemingway's instincts for form and fine writing leaves, it seems to me, much more to be said.

There is a certain understanding among small boys, and among men who retain their boyishness in the face of feminizing influences, that there is to be no squealing when you're hurt -- no crying out in pain or defeat. "Keeping the stiff upper lip," "playing the man," are colloquial expressions of this Spartan instinct -- "'Stout fellow" is an English equivalent. Certainly here is a principle that has been carried to absurdity, in the mediocrity and bathos of the applications which have been made of it. Out of it was born the "Grin and bear it" school of poetry, and the profusion of tales concerning touch-downs made on splintered ankles. I draw the curtain upon these, and propose that Hemingway has fashioned this essentially courageous stoicism into as tragic and unforgettable a mould as one can find anywhere in American writing.

We must realize, first, that there is no hope and no suspense in any of Hemingway's work. No suspense! cry modern readers, in dismay. May I remind them that there is precedent for such lack? They will search the tragedies of Shakespeare in vain, for a vestige of what we call suspense, in the sense of dubious outcome. There is never any doubt about the inexorable fate that looms large long before the last act. We know, almost at once, that there is no hope for Romeo and Juliet, no hope for Hamlet, none for Cordelia, none for Brutus. We are spectators at a pageant of con-

tinuous disaster, where no chance can vary the logical doom of men and women who fail to blend with the world. Once we have become reconciled to this awful certainty, the rest is beauty and calm -- the beauty of souls that are unique and therefore especially alive -- the calm of bravery approaching the precipice.

I find this in Hemingway, singing out under the constant beat of conversation and reiteration, the constant escape from solitude and soliloquy, for solitude could only be bitter, and soliloquy only an admission of defeat, some modern version of "to be or not to be." There must be no squealing, no quitting. Men must play at being undefeated. Consider Hemingway's short story of that title, *The Undefeated*, one of his finest. The bull-fighter knows he cannot vanquish this last bull, nor escape the horns. His picadero knows it. The crowd, above, knows it, and heaps the imprecations of the galleries upon him. Somehow, too, the bull has come to know it, and seems to await his victory with a grim ferocity. His energies slipping from him, Garcia holds his ground, snarls back at the crowd, and awaits the charge with sword pointed.

In another story, *The Killers*, a man, lying upon a bed, has news brought him of the arrival of two gunmen, hired assassins, who are out to kill him. He does not rise, there is no flight, no attempt at self-preservation. There is almost dignity in his quiescence as he stares dully at the ceiling, waiting. These men, the bull-fighter and the hunted man, are lost, and in their refusal to cry out they rise to a few extraordinary moments of significant living. This, I think, is high tragedy, and high art.

Or, they drink. How they drink! The pages of *The Sun Also Rises* reek with the heavy scent of raw gin -- "We had another drink" -- "Let's go around the corner for a bacardi" -- "He was blind. . . ." To be sure, there is the temptation to protest, as have certain readers. "This is so monotonous -- this drinking and drinking and drinking." Perhaps; yet I find nothing so moving and tragic in its implications as that tired, almost mechanical ritual of intoxication. It is their only surcease, a temporary staving off of consciousness, the best they can hope for. "You are all a lost generation," said Gertrude Stein to the expatriates in Paris, and they accepted her evaluation as their cross, their sign.

Consciousness means squarely facing an empty and purposeless existence. Jake is aware only of a life that can never, for him, be complete. He is robbed, irrevocably, of hope and purpose. Just as surely, Robert Cohn was robbed, at birth, of status in a Nordic world. Nothing can protect him from the merciless flailing of Michael, that splendid wastrel, who, drunk and sober, cuts with constant contempt, into the sensitive skin of Cohn. It is in the light of these dull pains, these quenchless miseries, that the apparently aimless sousing assumes a reason and a justification.

Don't think -- don't look -- don't feel -- forget about it. The only
virtue is the stiff upper lip and the hard laugh.

Enough has been said about Hemingway's objectiveness to necessitate no further discussion of it here. If it is true that the spirit of a book is the writer, then Hemingway is partially revealed as one who whistles in a void of frustration. Nowhere does he come to the aid of his inarticulate characters, inarticulate in the sense that every word they utter is subsidiary rubble on the sides of a volcano. His is the reticence of Jake, who says, "I felt pretty rotten," when he was actually frantic.

In the last analysis, perhaps, this is as close as we can get to the actual Hemingway. That life is very much of a mess; that nothing can be done about it; that we had best not talk about how badly things are really going; that the only escape is in triviality that will consume time, laughing or drinking, prize-fights or bull-fights -- these we may glean as probable tenets of his stoicism. He refuses to sympathize with his characters, and strips his stories of non-essential detail. I venture to say that he could write a great tragedy. He remains, I think, our outstanding realist.

BRIEFER MENTION

Daybreak, by Arthur Schnitzler (12mo, 204 pages; Simon & Schuster: \$1.50). If we have any fault to find with the story by this Viennese master it is that the plot is too swift, too firmly and pitilessly executed, to allow us time to do anything but follow with increasing anxiety the fate of its unlovable hero. Mr Schnitzler's unique place in European literature has been once more confirmed.

In Happy Ending, The Collected Lyrics of Louise Imogen Guiney (12mo, 195 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$2.50) first issued in 1909 and now re-issued with the addition of certain previously unpublished poems, a reader has the impression of lyric gifts well ordered and developed, but natively somewhat confined. There is much that is admirable here, much skill and style. Further, one is by no means prepared to think the poems not well felt. Yet it would seem that better than well the lyric should be felt both massively and intensely. And from this point of view limitations seem to start forward. As the poems are somewhat less than unique in language, so they appear somewhat less than sovereign in feeling.

Guide-Posts To Chinese Painting, by Louise Wallace Hackney, edited by Dr Paul Pelliot (illus., 8vo, 221 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$10). That a delighted consideration of art should be less than delightful; that as writing and as thinking it should be occidentally "prompt" is in this survey compensated for by illustrations such as Winter Landscape, Nar-

cissus, a Ming Ancestral Portrait; and one is as attentive as the author could wish one to be, to the "ideals and methods" of Chinese painting, to "influences and beliefs reflected in it," and the influence exerted by it. Any lover of beauty may well be grateful to a book which commemorates the blade of grass as model for the study of the straight line, the skill of calligraphers with "hog's hair on finely woven silk," "methods of treating mountain wrinkles," "tones of ink to 'give color,'" the thought of genii, winged tigers, an Emperor crossing " 'weak waters' on a bridge made of turtles," or a theme so romantic as that of Yang Kuei-fei "going, 'lily-pale, between tall avenues of spears to die.'"

Landmarks in Nineteenth Century Painting, by Clive Bell (10mo, 214 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$3.50). Like most non-French critics of art Mr Bell gives most of his time to interpreting French activities. He does it well. He has such excellent English and so clear a gift for definition that he easily sways the opinions of a considerable portion of the reading public. He sways but does not enfranchise. The readers who at last catch a ray of light do not venture far from the path that has been illuminated for them but return, at the first difficulty, to their guide. In the new volume they will be obliged to chuck poor Gabriel Rossetti out the window, because Mr Bell does; but this is just to make room for Cézanne, Seurat, and Van Gogh, who take possession of the end of the book. Turner remains, with Mr Bell's consent, but would it not be a greater triumph for him as a teacher, were one of his disciples now to pitch Turner also out the window? It would make Mr Bell blink, of course, but no one could say again that the Bell pupils were enslaved.

Journal of Katherine Mansfield, edited by J. Middleton Murry (8vo, 256 pages; Knopf: \$3.50). Mr Murry does wrong to his wife's slender reputation in causing to be printed, these fragments from her journals and letters. One finds in them little trace of a rich, mature nature. But one forgives her more than one forgives Mr Murry.

THE THEATRE

by Gilbert Seldes

MILESTONES whizzed through the journalistic air in the week following the production of Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude*¹ It was felt that something of the highest order of importance had taken place; the play was called not only Mr O'Neill's greatest, but the greatest American drama, and Mr Gilbert Gabriel, unhappily forgetting what the psychoanalysts have been able to do with the Oedipus plays, hailed its innovations as a technique at last competent to cope with Freud.

My own opinion is that *Strange Interlude* is a play of exceptional merits almost entirely spoiled by technical infelicities. Mr

O'Neill has developed the aside and the soliloquy to a point where they correspond to the interior monologue, the stream of consciousness, as it is used by contemporary novelists; and it happens that he is so good a dramatist that possibly he alone, of all our playwrights, does not need the method. Frequently the soliloquizing of the characters told us something we might not otherwise have known; it was not always important, but it was informative. The complex asides (to use the old name) almost invariably repeated something which the excellent dialogue and the excellent acting had already made plain. Thus in one scene Edmund Darrell determines to claim the paternity of Sam Evans' child; Sam rushes in, full of happiness to embrace his old friend; Darrell stammers out the first words of his confession and claim, then breaks down and changes his phrases into a greeting. It is perfectly clear what has happened; the same technique has been used in comedy and tragedy for a hundred years or a thousand. And Mr O'Neill, mastered by his technique, asks us to sit by while Darrell, facing Evans, says, "I can't tell him," and goes on to explain that Sam's boisterous happiness, his assurance, his faith, have made the revelation impossible. The moment these asides become unnecessary, they become impertinent and one recognizes the absurdity of the technical device, for in all the time of the aside, the other character stands waiting. One compares these unnecessary interruptions to the course of the drama with the scenes where O'Neill has done his most dramatic writing, where the tremendous swing of his drama simply compelled him to drop his method, and where, if the method were legitimate, it would most suitably be employed.

One of these scenes is the conversation between Nina Evans and her husband's mother. The older woman tells the younger that she must not give life to the child which has already begun to quicken in her, because insanity runs through Sam's family; she tells how she made the discovery after she had conceived Sam and hadn't herself the courage to do what she now counsels the younger woman to do: destroy the unborn child and, keeping all things secret from the husband, in order to preserve his sanity, find a healthy father for a child which shall pass as the husband's. Here is one of the richest complications of motives our stage has given us; all through it the minds of the two women must be racing with thousands of half-formed thoughts, with overpowering emotions. And O'Neill has given them to us with hardly a break in the continuous statement and question and reply between the two; everything needful is directly spoken, although these two characters have less reason to be frank with each other than others in the play. They are driven to dramatic utterance by the intensity of emotion; where the others are intense, they fumble with O'Neill's tricks.

I do not wish to suggest that O'Neill has deliberately tried a stunt; there is nothing meretricious in him and he sincerely believed, I am sure, that he could not, in any other way, give the dimension

of depth to his characters. He underestimated his own power. Mr Robert Littell has proposed to the Theatre Guild a production of *Strange Interlude* with all the new devices omitted; his interest is in proving the desirability of the present method. I earnestly implore the Guild to make such a production because I am sure that the play will gain infinitely in dramatic power, in capacity to elevate the emotions of the audience, in sustained interest.

Because in his glum, humourless brooding over his characters O'Neill has endowed them with passions, and that isn't a common thing in the theatre. As they are now projected they are shadows on a wall, gigantic, but still shadows. In proper perspective they would have a vehemence of life, a tremendous energy. Even in the dreary reaches of the present production they maintain a certain hold on you; in the end, by dint of talking about themselves, they make themselves known. They are enmeshed in a philosophy which is almost meaningless to me, although I have met it in almost all of O'Neill's later plays. "Life IS," even if the IS recognizes no WHYS, does not seem to me particularly meaningful or exceptional thematic material. The play, of course, runs away from the author's invocations to mystic forces; the characters in it engage in heroic battles with each other, with time, with themselves, with fate. They don't give a hang whether life is and the fact that God is a woman does not console them; they struggle to make life, create it, protect it, to give it meaning and nobility and beauty. If Mr O'Neill had only let them!

The production of this play was extraordinarily good. I have not been known as an uncritical admirer of Mr Philip Moeller; but I am unable to see how his direction could have been bettered. It was never mannered and it had a sound style; it was not tricky, but it was technically clever; it was utterly honest. The extremely difficult business of introducing the uttered thoughts of the characters in the midst of their conversations was handled with amazing deftness. It would have been easy merely to create a convention: whenever the speaker turns toward the audience and the other characters look fixedly into space -- that means an interior expression. The monotony of such a convention is precisely what killed the old aside. Mr Moeller created a style of utterance for these monologues; sometimes a change in the tone gave the audience the cue, sometimes a variation in expression, or in pace; sometimes a look or a movement. This variety of means helped O'Neill enormously.

Mr Moeller had also to deal with some uncertainties in the author's mind (I guess from the result; I know nothing of O'Neill's intentions). The characters sometimes appear as embodied forces, abstract ; sometimes they are implacably going through the common experiences of life with radio sets and yachts, enormously realistic.

In the former case, O'Neill's mysticism is a danger to the production; in the latter, his naïveté. And welding the two is a work requiring some finesse. The woman who maunders a little about the Godhead must remain somehow associated with the woman who is darning socks -- the fact that the same actress plays the two parts, that they are written under the single name of Nina in the text, is not a help unless the producer takes care of the modulations. Here again I think Mr Moeller has done remarkably well. The cast he worked with is intelligent and alert; the four players who carry through the whole drama: Lynn Fontanne, Earle Larimore, Glenn Anders, and Tom Powers each do something fine at one time or another, and I thought Helen Westley, in her single scene, was exceptionally able because she had to launch the play into its true orbit, and did it with great power.

Mr Robert Emmet Sherwood has been blamed for pretentiousness in *The Queen's Husband* and is, in my opinion, blameless since his play is a bagatelle in which he does not seek the secret of life, as he did in *The Road to Rome*; there has also been some censure for the vehemence with which a socialist agitator in the play persuades the King to protest against the murder of little children -- which again seems to me quite all right. This play, about the King to such a Queen as Marie of Rumania, suffers from only one thing: the character of the King is not coherent; perhaps it would be better to say that the two characters given the King do not cohere. We are familiar enough with the silly-ass who under his apparent feebleness of mind and will lays deep satisfactory plots; but when the King in this play prefers a chess game to putting down a revolution we get, as dénouement, not something astute he has done in advance, but a mere accident by which the revolt ends. The King is neither wise enough nor foolish enough.

However, he is played by Roland Young with delicacy of address, with nimble wit, with completeness of portraiture. Seeing Mr Young on a night when everything went wrong with the stage management, I recognized the difference between watching a fine actor and "catching" a good performance. I am sure that when the guns go off at the right moment, Mr Young's performance has greater ease; and I am equally sure that all the ease in the world would not better the fundamental creation of the part, since in that Mr Young is perfect.

Salvation is a superficial play about a girl evangelist. It is superficial because it tells nothing of the religion of the protagonist except that she believes. A course in William James would have given the authors, Sidney Howard and Charles MacArthur, the background against which the salvationist, Bethany, could give us the movements of her soul; but it might have spoiled the melodrama of the financial harpies who prey on her. I am not sure that

Miss Lord was better than in most of her performances; she was agreeably different. Osgood Perkins was agreeably the same. And Robert Edmond Jones's setting for a waiting-room behind the Tabernacle was a masterpiece.

In the course of this play occurs a tiny scene at a breakfast-table. The salvationist and her husband make small-town small-talk. It is pretty neatly done; but I suggest that all our dramatists get together and write one such scene in collaboration and that this scene be made obligatory, to be played without variation whenever it is necessary to fill in time or get a few laughs. At the first words of it, we could all get an extra smoke in the lobby.

Moissi in *The Living Corpse* was not, to my mind, a whit better than John Barrymore. The production had at times depth, intensity, and style; at times it lacked these elements. It left, for first place in the Reinhardt season, *Tot Deatu* or *Danton* and *The Servant of Two Masters*; and the director whose range covers these extreme types, is a master.

Joe Cook has returned to New York. By the time this is printed, the announcement will not be news; but it will still be good news.

¹ *Strange Interlude*. By Eugene O'Neill. 8vo. 352 pages. Boni and Liveright. \$2.50.

MODERN ART

by Henry McBride

THE business of waking up to find yourself famous is still as mysterious to the beholder as it is gratifying to the protagonist. Mysterious, I mean, prior to the event. Immediately a new name is emblazoned against the sky science can prove that the apparent accident was, on the contrary, a logical happening; but science is still powerless to make all the little, and no doubt subtle, arrangements that can result, at a given moment, in spontaneous fame. No doubt, a great deal of quiet preparation is necessary, just as in nature, an enormous amount of living (and dying, and rotting, and other disagreeable processes) precedes the seepage of oil to the spot where a Mr Marland, in Oklahoma, can tap it blithely to the tune of millions of dollars. My metaphor, now that I look at it, instructs me that the hope that I had instantly begun to cherish at the mere mention of "science and sudden fame" is futile. Science, in spite of our unholy worship of it, cannot make something out of nothing. All science can do, all that wizardry can do, is to locate and tap the source. The oil, it appears, must be there first, and without doubt De Chirico had oil. Oh, of course, it was of

De Chirico I was thinking. De Chirico burst instantly into flame immediately his New York show opened. You knew that, if you read the newspapers, but it is impossible to let the occasion pass without citing a few of the dry facts that are already known to have aided the conflagration.



De Chirico, by Van Vechten

But first I must admit that "waking up famous" is not precisely descriptive. De Chirico, for instance, already had a Paris reputation and what he woke up to was only a New York reputation! But the Paris *réclame* was a matter of slow growth and the New York excitement generated in a day. The phenomenon as a phenomenon is just as interesting when happening to one great city as when happening to an entire world; and for that matter when New York adds its strength to that of Paris the union is, for all practical purposes, the entire world. To bring it about -- the phenomenon, I mean -- not much preliminary thinking was done, for, as I have hinted, it is generally agreed that more than thinking is necessary, but in this case it was young Mr Dudensing's decision not to make too much money out of the affair, to sell all rather than a few, that supplied the igniting spark. The effect created was that of "bar. gain day." A further effect, made by the pictures themselves, was that De Chirico was a much greater painter than anybody had supposed. The two effects together were irresistible. Something like a stampede of buying took place. One unfortunate collector (meaning myself) who made a little list of three desirable items and then walked out and around the block to think it over, returned to find all three irrevocably sold to more impetuous connoisseurs!

In saying De Chirico "had the oil," or as we say in business, "had the stuff," I imply that his values (money values) were self-evident. The slowly growing Parisian reputation was known to

all Americans who take account of such matters, and the work upon which it was founded was also known. This work was mystifying at times but interesting. "He is a fumiste," said Mr Meier-Graefe, the German critic who had come to this country recently to study the younger American painters at close range and who had sauntered into the Valentine Gallery (Mr Dudensing's) ostensibly to see some Joseph Stellas and who confessed he had never seen such De Chiricos as these in Europe. Fumiste, perhaps; though I prefer the word "mocker" as suggesting a deeper impulse. A sensitive Italian, face to face with the modern world in Paris, can be excused, if any one can be, for putting his tongue in his cheek! Even if he becomes bitter it is nobody's business but his own -- providing always that he remain the artist, which De Chirico does. The mystery indeed is how any of these artists remain simple in such a complex world and the answer is, no doubt, that they achieve it at the expense of blindness. De Chirico is neither blind nor forgetful. He remembers the formidable past and sees only too clearly the formidable present. The two things war within him and he does not pretend to solve the puzzle but inveigles you, too, into the conflict.

Les Plaisirs du Poète! A barren, forbidding, empty city square, of the kind that gave the horrors to "B.V." Thompson, and still gives them to millions of less articulate people -- and into this repellent oasis between railway station and factory, there wanders, at dusk, a tiny poet! He is so small you scarcely see him at first. In fact, it is only when you have consulted your catalogue that you suspect his presence and know him, poor thing, for what he is.

Fumisterie? Indeed, it was not fumisterie to "B.V." Thompson whose *City of Dreadful Night* contains everything that the antique spirit urges against the new. It is something more than fumisterie to live in such a hard place, say, as New York and to have nothing more formidable than a sigh to combat it with. But a sigh, a genuine poet's sigh, outweighs, with the arbiters of eternal justice, the armaments of the mightiest cities and can yet be heard when they have become dust. *Les Plaisirs du Poète*! It is rather a new thing to incorporate a title so solidly into a picture. It is not being literary in the tabooed fashion of the salons. It is a new power that shines from the outside -- decidedly a fourth dimension -- that colours the whole aspect of the artist's vision and compels you to view it in the two ways. These titles -- *Le Destin du Blasphémateur*, *Le Printemps du Destin*, *La Punition de l'Omniscient*, et cetera -- are part of the De Chirico wit that was already familiar to us, but what really made the exhibition sensational was the discovery that the new pictures -- of 1926 and 1927 -- while losing nothing in the way of satire, had gained enormously as painting. It was with pleased surprise, therefore, that those who had hitherto considered this artist "interesting" now acknowledged him a master among the modernists.

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

KENNETH Burke

is was on the two thousand, two hundred and seventy-second concert of the Philharmonic that Toscanini, having found in the course of his season certain pieces which had delighted beyond the others, played them all on the one evening. The Haydn *symphony in G-major*, to which Mozart, Beethoven, and even Stravinsky are shown to have contributed. The Elgar *"Enigma" Variations*, by a grave and cultured toast-master, a musician and a gentleman, here writing compliments and epistles, and manifesting the eclecticism of such. The Honegger *Pastorale d'Eté*, and its denial, the *Pacific 231*, given much like two movements of a single piece. Ottorino Respighi's *Pini di Roma*, with celesta, watchman's rattle, New Year's blares, trumpet off stage, and the phonograph record of a nightingale.

Concerning the almost causal relationship between the two Honegger numbers: the summer day of the *Pastorale d'Eté* was so atmospheric, and the composer so gentle in his sensitivity, that on the formula of the *Pastoral Symphony* one naturally awaits the storm-music. It came, four years later, in *Pacific 231*, which Signor Toscanini has telescoped into a single programme. The reversal is one of both mood and technique; for whereas the earlier composition is unusually simple thematically and in tonality, with its developments and recapitulations readily manifest, the second falls within the category of agglomerate sound. Yet in turning from the "calme, vif et gai" of his Alpine meadows to the cumbersome effects of the iron monster, we seem to have made no essential change whatsoever." The locomotive is as lyrical as the summer's day, presenting an anthology of the most erudite utterances of which a locomotive is capable -- and there is nothing here to suggest the irritability underlying the Sacre.

The Respighi *Pines* profits by the strong contrasting of its four movements: most notably the sudden putting away of holiday noises at the intrusion of ecclesiastic gloom (as the second movement encroaches upon the first), and -- in the transition from the third movement to the fourth -- the ominous growth of the tempo di marcia out of the twittering of the honest little nightingale. The piece ends in a long, patiently mounting crescendo for which we are less indebted to the imaginativeness of the composer than to the tact of the conductor. Such a slow, inexorable increase of volume and tempo probably corresponds, in its sure efficacy, to the death-bed scene in drama. It works, particularly if there is a technician like Toscanini to govern the rheostat.

The third concert of the League of Composers (New American

Music, by Marion Bauer, Marc Blitzstein, Quinto Maganini, and Roy Harris) contained many moments wherein the inventive had become the emotional, the music being not merely an exposition but a plea. The Maganini *Sonata for Flute and Piano* brought out appealingly the complementary textures of these two instruments: the piano a vague background of sound, the flute isolated and soliloquizing -- a wandering and (on becoming slow) meditative flute. The artist assures us that he was careful to eschew "diminished sevenths, augmented triads, authentic cadences, endless thirds and sixths, the stereotype fugue and monotonous rhythms," putting in their place "new sound combinations, contrapuntal effects and rhythmic devices." . . . The Marc Blitzstein piano sonata began and ended as a kind of "stunt writing," with an intervening adagio lamentoso which suggested considerably, and pleasantly, Chopin. The annoying tendency of the new idiom to become excessively episodic (this is as apparent in Joyce as in any music) is deliberately emphasized, sounds being encouraged to fall in sporadic bursts, followed by abrupt silences. The notes themselves, in their odd way of dropping, produced minor forms which were ingenious...The Roy Harris Sextet, for string quartet, clarinet, and piano, was undoubtedly the firmest work on the programme, though the themes in their re-working were perhaps inferior to their first solemn utterance. The andante, with its clear, solid accommodations of the parts to one another, was cautious and formal.

Fifteen minutes afterwards, we found ourselves translated -- listening now to the Hall Johnson Jubilee Singers at the Embassy Club. Perhaps our difficulties at the League of Composers figured somewhat in the blossoming of our delight; but in any event the zest, the unction, the physical undulations, the naive epicureanism of these singers overwhelmed us, like a revelation. There was much musicianship of the concert variety, there were many effects of mingled vaudeville and devotion -- and there was a tall, gaunt woman who sang *Deep River* in a voice and a manner which no operatic trainer ever dreamed of, an epicene alternation of bass and falsetto. We speak with avidity, as it is late in the day to be discovering Harlem.

The evening closed with a Bloch *Suite for Viola and Piano*, a work which was shown to possess much of the variety and breadth, but less of the continuity, of major music.

1 Or did Toscanini participate in the merger of these pieces? The Honegger *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, played recently at one of the New School's valuable *Concerts of Modern Music*, appeared to have little in common with either the *Pastorale* or the *Pacific*. Its great activity seemed of a purely manufactured sort, an arbitrary ranging up and down of piano and violin, with the avoidance of older harmonic and melodic procedures more in evidence than the discovery of new ones. The Kodaly *Serenade for*

Two Violins and Viola, on the same programme, seemed more positive, with a nervousity and an insistence in the scraping fiddles which should have contributed but slightly to the reassurance of the serenaded lady.

=====

MAY

ON SIGNORA ELEONORA DUSE

Eleonora Duse. By Arthur Symons. 8vo. 164 pages. Duffield and Company. \$3.

BY GORDON CRAIG

ONE of the really difficult things for even a professional writer to do seems to be to write well about great actors and actresses.

I find in all my books on actors* (and I have some hundreds of them) hardly one which is really worth while.

Yet Edmund Kean, Henry Irving, Talma, Salvini, Ristori, and Sarah Bernhardt were something to write about -- one supposes so anyhow.

One supposed this when in the Theatre and aware of their presence : we were astounded, awakened, sure that the thing we were witnessing was one of the wonders of the world, and of course positive that the many writers we saw in the house could do justice to the actor -- even quite convinced that we too could write about that.

Yet when we read the books written on these six men and women of theatrical genius, or indeed by them, and then ask someone who saw any of them act if the books give any proper notion of the performers or the performance, the answer will be the old admission, that the books are empty of all which counted. This is why I feel that it must be one of the difficult things to do to write well of a great performer.'

It is this particular "greatness" which is so elusive, for when a performer is not so "great" he fares much better at the hands of the fine writer; the fine writer is happier, and the result is some perfect little essays on Deburau, Ferravilla, Munden, Sada Yaco, Réjane, or Yvette Guilbert.

Why this is so I must leave for some profounder thinker to decide upon, for here I am to consider a book on one of the greatest of performers.

Eleonora Duse was one of the great figures. Apart from the fact that she was an exceptionally gifted, and possibly the most perfect actress of her age, she was a great figure in Europe.

And this is surprising, for she was not incessantly before the public. For years at a time she would retire; some say she sulked, others that the stage revolted her -- people would say anything of an actress in those days.

What most people were unable to do was to recognize the real Eleonora Duse: they saw her and yet could not see her: they knew her and yet failed to understand her: she would speak to them and they would instantly fall under her power.

That is what she wanted -- she was an actress, and the first thing the actress thinks of is to hold her audience. A great actress takes no chances and never fails to overwhelm her audience.

They were held and then they were carried away; their reason left them: that is what she both hated to see and yet longed to see herself doing: robbing them of all power.

This mesmeric trick is a necessary item in the performer's repertory.

II

I have heard it said that life is all a dream, a delusion. I am not able to give more time than I have already done to enquire further. I have wasted quite enough time already wondering about many things I was led to suppose were other than they seemed.

Life seems to me to be quite good enough as it is, so I will not bother to stop and meditate in the middle of the thoroughfare.

But perhaps some actors and actresses in contemplating and in portraying life, have been unconsciously led to look upon it as a big delusion and have believed that as acting is (or is supposed to be) life in little, the stage is a world since all the world's a stage.

The remark is placed in the mouth of none other than the melancholy Jaques.

You have heard of this melancholy man -- you have never heard

of him except as a melancholy man. "We all visualize Jaques to be draped . . . in a careful cloak of black" writes Sir A. Quiller-Couch. We suppose we see him -- sad eyes, long face, dark and moody: he crawls, he doesn't walk: he sighs often -- he never laughs but he screeches.

Oh, we all know Jaques.

Yet I will venture to hold that not one of us can say what manner of man he was, how he should be represented on the stage, what he looked like, and what was really the matter with him.

At any rate we have not, to my knowledge, ever seen any right representation of him on any stage, even as we have never yet seen a right representation of *Hamlet*...Another melancholy man by the by . . . and in black: sighing, groaning, distinctly depressed.

If really all the world be a stage and if really the stage be a small world, then of course when we see a man looking gloomy twice in the course of a week we will at once put him down as a melancholy man. We need make no further effort to understand anything more or to look any further; we can take things as the label tells us to take them. And this is how we took Duse.

We took her to be a melancholy woman: and she with her infinite spirit of humour, took us as we labelled ourselves.

She saw us entering the theatre, she sized us up, she knew she was expected to be a dismal wonder, and so she made up carefully for that part.

When she entered in the first scene we all rose and greeted her profound grief, our emotions were stirred to their very depths -- (after careful sounding . . . about half an inch) -- and in those shallows she revelled.

There are few examples in history of so terrible a sense of humour as she displayed in forcing herself to be gay while three thousand spectators were calling to her "Make us cry -- oh, do make us sob some more."

The good lady did her best; for years she would solemnly enter the playhouse, and there donning something grey, grey-white and floating, would explain by gestures and sounds all the sadness that is in life. "Oh thank you -- thank you" we said. We could say no more -- our feelings choked us: we felt that we could not be sure not to break down. We left a flower -- a lily or a white camelia -- and went our way. "Wasn't she wonderful" -- "What an angel."

III

I knew the Signora Duse slightly.

Never in my life have I met any one more merry . . . gayer, than she.

I was rather a shy young man. I'm not shy any more of course, but I remained young for a very long time, so for long I retained that shyness which seems to me to be so very stupid.

I was very shy when I first spoke to her, but she was exceedingly practical and kindly, and when some years later I met her again I remember she asked me to help her in some stage work.

I was to design some scenes for her . . . that was all.

She wrote down in fullest detail all the essential points which she thought could be of use to me.

I have these records still, and most interesting they are.

I will not re-copy them here for they are so technical that the public would be quite unable to understand what they mean. Like some sketch by Vazin or some notes by Probst they are not for the public but are solely intended for the eyes of the worker in the theatre; perhaps not even are they for him.

I ought by all the fashionable laws of profit and. parade to produce them here and now, to reproduce them in facsimile; to draw attention to the way the i's are dotted and show the significance of the dash at the end of the word "réve."

I ought to do this because I ought to possess some of that divine sense of humour which blazed in this fine lady and which permitted her to indulge her public.

I'll prefer not to indulge mine. Curiosity is a bad habit which has been far too long cosseted.

The letters I received from Eleonora Duse will remain with me and will never be published -- not one word. The diagrams, designs, and all shall remain with me -- for the public would merely find them one more proof of her "sad sad life," whereas I see in every word a fine amount of joy.

A legend was created around her by people not quite in their senses. I think I must have assisted at this in my youth.

People around me were ever so ready to cry out "Poor poor woman" on every occasion that her name was mentioned: indeed they were rather too apt to do so about every woman.

I dare say I too took up the pose of one who felt quite sorry.

It became a legend, her sorrow. And this legend about Duse being a "poor woman" gathered force until all England was groaning "Oh the poor woman -- oh, the poor dear creature" whenever she was mentioned: adding "that brute d'Annunzio."

What d'Annunzio had to do with it was not clear to me at the time, nor has it since become any clearer.

To judge from the wailing chorus, Signora Duse had met but one man in her life and he was called d'Annunzio: whereas we know that Signora Duse had met hundreds, and we are told that she lived near those she loved well enough to tolerate as lovers, and then, unfortunately, had tolerated none.

With her fellow-actors she was always a good comrade: although occasionally as a pick-me-up she would ask them all to die of the plague. Talma and Kean put it differently but said the same thing. Wagner said worse things. It's a way that artists have. Unfortunate to you, fortunate for us. You are the public, we are the artists and we are firmly persuaded that Wagner, Kean, Talma, and Duse are right. Let all the unlucky thirteen thousand place-seekers die of ten plagues if they are to continue to get in the way of all the good things which have a right to place.

And these curses so often hurled by artists of genius at these nonentities who won't wake up, who won't even be human, and who won't keep their place but who are eternally pushing and elbowing to get into places they are unfitted for, these curses are evils welcomed by the best actors and performers.

The best actors are wonderful dear creatures, and so they understand when another of the troupe says "Oh, go to Hell" ; and when one of the most gifted of their number says it, like any ordinary admiral of the King's Navee, they rather like it.

Bernhardt was in the habit of a cussin' and a swearin' at the actors, carpenters, musicians, and all of them: that's understood. It means nothing: 'tis but a reminder that at that precise moment "le diable au corps" is getting a bit frisky.

I am, I note, writing in a rather too jaunty tone. But I am not exactly writing at all -- you will, I am afraid, not call this writing: I am but what a friend of mine would call "thinking aloud."

IV

Let me go on thinking aloud . . . and now think a while of this book.'

Mr Symons has always written well, and he writes of books even better, I think, than when he writes of actors and acting.

Books are such grand things.

When he comes to acting he falls in love with it. He loses his heart to the performer and he sometimes grows confused.

I have said how impossible it is to write on an actor's performance of a passion. So how write on the passion itself. Yet Mr Symons sometimes attempts to do this too.

He writes of Duse and her performances and he writes of Signora Duse and her lovers.

I don't see how it can be done, and so I am not surprised as I read to come across some slips.

To write that "Boito was Duse's only perfect and purely passionate lover" -- to write of "the not quite final break or separation between Duse and Boito" is, I think, somehow to slip.

For who knows about such things, who can know? Not I, not you, and not he. Even Signora Duse, even Signor Boito may not have known. And I believe that the History of Man (ay, in the catalogue we go for men) deserves better of us all.

The history of actors too, deserves nothing less. . .

Who is there can describe what Irving was in "The Bells" or even at supper after "The Bells"? I would that someone could. Who can show us Kean as Sir Giles Overreach? "It is not possible -- it is not possible" whispered Munden the actor, as he was dragged almost in hysterics off the stage where Kean lay raving; and I find that is the best thing I know to describe what it was -- this event of Kean as Overreach -- and the impossible cannot be described. And the Kean scandals . . . or Rachel's amours . . . no, it is impossible to know . . . it is vulgar to repeat.

So that when reading about this fine actress Eleonora Duse we must put out of our heads much which has been put into them by those who never knew and cannot know.

Signora Duse's great sorrow is, begging your pardons, all fiddle-de-dee. Signora Duse's great good sense is quite another matter, and we may hope that a small brochure will some day be written upon this great good sense.

I never saw her but I was aware of it. I saw her seldom.

Once, without seeing her, I designed her some scenes and costumes when I was in Berlin. It was Hofmannsthal's "Electra" which I was told she wished me to design for. I did the drawings; I had the scenes, the costumes, made and these were sent to her. I never saw her about this; a German friend of the poet arranged everything, and from him I heard many reports . . . I forget what they were about but I believe she was not pleased . . . I think she did not play the piece.

The second time I designed for her she was in Berlin. I met her then. To me, when I was a young actor and in London 15 years earlier, she had always seemed something from another world -- a kind of spirit -- because it was at twenty years of age I first saw her act -- one remembers well what one sees at twenty. Besides we young English men of that time were like that . . . often thinking of that other world.

So that when, later, I spoke to her in Berlin through her daughter who interpreted, and through one or two friends who interrupted, I spoke to her as to a Deity, as one wanting to know what it was she wished me to do. I felt that I was nobody and that she was a kind of dream.

These were very quiet talks, and her daughter was most kind and helpful.

With Signora Duse I was not, as I too often was with others, egoistical or impulsive, I was merely very anxious to help if I could. I felt more like a nephew than a co-worker.

She wrote down what she wanted. I was to go to Florence and do the work there, so although I knew no Italian I went to Florence and I did my best.

She had told me that no real scene-painter could be persuaded to carry out my designs, but she would find me "a little painter" whom I could instruct. She was not able to find me even "a little painter," so I walked around Florence to see what luck could find me and stopping at the open door of a furniture-dealer's shop which was being done up, I saw two house-painters decorating the walls with first-class whitewash: I looked up an Englishman who kindly acted for me as interpreter, and I engaged these two descendants

of the Angelos' and the Vincis' to come and help me. The mere detail of having to roam around in a strange town to buy the cloth (a rough sackcloth, for there was no scene-painters' canvas to be obtained in Florence, paper is used for sceneries and I was unfamiliar with paper sceneries) this and the other annoyances which can never be avoided if you are a stranger, were not what one expected one would have to encounter with the greatest actress of Italy to say the magic word to all those around her; one did imagine that all that would be made easy, but it didn't matter . . . my Italian workmen proved to be wonderfully quick, and we were soon at work in the teatro "La Pergola."

They gave me no trouble whatever: they slapped on the paint beautifully: it was a big scene so it took some 5 or 6 days to complete.

Then the scene had to be lighted. I was allowed an hour in which to do that. Some artists find a day barely enough time in which to light a rather difficult scene properly.

I too found an hour wasn't quite enough time, but I found we did it in an hour.

That is because the men at the Pergola were very able.

Then Duse came in to see the scene.

She showed great good sense.

Please do not suppose that she clapped her hands, began to weep, made speeches, or anything of that kind.

She was admirable. She saw at a glance that I was mad. She said to herself, "This is not a scene for an Ibsen play -- it's a scene for -- something big but it's not Ibsen because I know my Ibsen" and here her mouth grew a trifle hard.

But with astonishing good sense she pulled herself together and acted the part of a great actress who is dealing with a madman and who sees it's quite useless to protest.

"It is wonderful" she said.

Now could anything more sound in its common sense have been uttered ?

Finding that this gave me and my men pleasure (for we saw nothing at all wonderful in it) she began to say a number of nice things -- one more sensible it seemed to us than the other; she then went home to think it over.

I followed her in her thoughts so I know what those thoughts were. Here they are:

"This man, though mad, has done the work in time: he is dear Ellen's son; that alone decides me that we must go through with it."

"It will quite astonish the Florentines who will call me all sorts of names"" -- here her thoughts grew twinkling and hot at the idea of puzzling her audience.

"This man pleases me" her thoughts went on: "he really did do the work in time -- and I never thought he'd be ready. But it's abigempty scene. Yes, very big and so empty -- I shall know what to do to be seen, but poor Signora -- -- and Signor , they will be lost." Here her thoughts were so complicated, became such a brown study, that I found it impossible to read them.

By the time they began to twinkle again she was already through with her lunch which was on a tray placed on a chair before which she sat in an arm-chair.

"Yes," she twinkled, "it will be really difficult and interesting to play in that scene."

Her thoughts here turned to Verona and to those early days when she had acted in the huge Arena there, on a not very large stage but with a certain sense of immensity around both her and the spectators.

She twinkled like a radio machine to think of the delight of having something difficult to do.

"When I snap the wooden paper knife in the second Act, will the sound be lost?" the twinkling became incessant now. "Lost! -- what fun -- why, it will sound like the crack of a rifle in that empty hall. Yes it will tell."

She rose up, went through bits of the scene -- linking them together with a thought. Then she lay down to rest a little, and as she lay there her good sense decided that never again would she ask me or any other crazy artist to design her any other scene. "You must do me new scenes for 'Lady from the Sea,' 'Borkman,' 'Cleopatra,' 'Dame aux Camélias,' all my repertoire" she had cried out to me and my merry men when she had seen that immense but (I think) quite unpractical scene.

And that too was rare common sense in her -- to be so full of kindness -- to want to say she would do anything . . . meaning to

and yet not meaning to.

And now at home quietly resting on her bed to register in the pages of her mind just as quietly, just as sensibly, this thought, -- "Never again."

I who read her thoughts though I was at the other end of Florence, saw all these kind and sensible entries recorded there.

She rested, and then she acted -- then she wrote me -- -still full of ardour for the future which she had so sensibly decided should never be. You see she thought I was quite mad.

You call such women wild, unpractical, emotional, carried away, uncertain.

You have a phrase in America which many of us in England like because it is expressive, 'Not on your life.' Well, I now say "Not on your life."

Duse was a remarkable being. She deserved to be prime minister of Italy -- she was fitted to be that by genius if you like to call it that. I shall call it by great good sense.

V

And how commanding she was.

In my London days when I was only twenty and she came there to play, I made adoration, as to some power which could command all that is good to the good of the world, even the stage world.

Instead of adoration, let us call it downright fear. It's plainer.

Later on it was the same -- Duse was always tremendous to me. She seemed to be the Queen of the European Theatre. I felt that at any moment she might give an order and 300 people would leap forward from the spot where I supposed them to lie hid by her express wish...I waited to see that spectacle -- that miracle -- at Florence. I must admit I was ready to leap with them.

They never leapt: perhaps they didn't hear her: perhaps she never called them: all I know is I worked for the Queen of the European Stage when she seemed to have no courtiers, no staff, and no one willing to raise a hand to do anything. It was most exhilarating. One was in a state to join in with ecstasy -- to follow obediently, anywhere.

She gave no outward sign of that immense good sense of which I have spoken -- and so I did not discover this at the time; I read her thoughts, was puzzled, but still I did not discover what it all signified, its practical, its almost worldly wisdom.

When, after Rosmersholm at Florence, people began to say "Craig is to produce a dozen plays with the great Duse" there was quite a little stir. When none of these were produced there was another little stir. But I never dreamed the extent of the nonsense which was being spread around about a terrible quarrel between this Queen of the Stage and one of her most willing assistants.

Some years later I overheard two people talking loudly about me in a café. I chuckled and listened on.

"Yes he was very furious -- banged the table."

"What did she do?"

"Poor dear . . . she cried' -- "after that she rose in her majesty and said 'Craig, leave me, go! forth!! I never wish to see you again.' "

"Really, how interesting, and why was he so cross?"

"Well you see he hated all women meddling in the profession -- "

"Yes, yes, I heard he had treated her badly."

This, ladies and gentlemen, is the nonsense (Shakespeare calls it "Jeperous distilment") which they pour into your ear, these odd folk, day and night.

This was supposed to refer to me and Eleonora Duse. Fancy any one treating the mighty Duse badly, being cross, banging a table, J of all people too . . . I who in her presence always dwindled to the age of eighteen or nineteen, thought her a kind of divinity, barely uttered two words in her presence -- and never would have dared to say Bo to her shadow.

But I will let you into a secret.

When, after seeing my work for Rosmersholm, she had asked me to help her with all those plays, some of which I have named, I did certainly feel happy, for I really was thoroughly deceived -- she did it so naturally.

Then when she began to send me telegrams, cancelling this play, and then telegrams cancelling that play -- then I was also deceived.

This time I certainly felt most unhappy. And I was to be heard saying, "In work all women are alike -- a pack of whims; first yes; then no. Alone they work wonderfully; to work with them is a downright torture."

It was only later, after pondering on it for some years, that I saw what I had taken for whim was great good sense.

And then it was that I began to see the immensity of her colossal life performance off the stage, and my big scene for Rosmersholm dwindled to the size of a penny match-box.

* Heine's brief passages on Edmund Kean are among the few successful attempts.

CERVANTES' HOUSE

BY AZORIN

Translated From the Spanish by Katie Lush

Note: By permission of Azorin, this portion of Cervantes' Bride has been translated from Provincial Towns of Spain and will be followed by four other selections.

tga is a town with a seigniorial and warlike tradition.

Turn to the Topographical Data not yet published, that were demanded by Philip II. "Esquivias," says the Chapter of Replies to the Monarch in 1576, eight years before Cervantes' marriage, "Esquivias contained 250 inhabitants; of these, 37 hidalgos of ancient lineage." These hidalgos bore names such as: Bivares, Salazares -- the name of the father of Cervantes' bride -- Avalos, Mejias, Ordofiez, Barrosos, Palacios -- the name of the mother of Cervantes' bride -- Carriazos -- the name of one of the heroes of La Ilustre Fregona -- Argandofias, Guevaras, Vozmedianos, Quijadas -- the name of the good Don Alonso. "In letters," the Council goes on to say, "there is no record that any persons of pre-eminent merit had come from Esquivias; but in arms there have been many captains, ensigns and men of valour."

I walk again through the narrow streets and plazas; I go from one side to the other, aware of the languor with which the breath of the wakening spring has filled me. Doorways are open, affording now and then glimpses of a gravelled patizuelo with its twisted vine and pompous euonymus bush. From the Calle de la Fé I turn into the Calle de San Sebastian, from the Calle de San Sebastian into the Calle de la Palma, from the Calle de la Palma into the Calle de los Caballeros ; the street-names of these old Spanish towns

have an indescribable fascination and power to detain one. I stop for a moment in the Calle de la Daga. Could anything be more charged with enchantment and allusiveness in an old house than these wide dismantled corridors, unfurnished, silent, these small doors? Is there anything more suggestive in an old city than these short little streets -- like this Calle de la Daga -- where no one lives, where the walls are stable walls, broken perhaps by a wide gate, always shut, which leads into a patio, with a background of open country, perhaps a rising slope on which seed is germinating.

I gaze for a moment or two; and walk on through the narrow little streets. "The houses in this part of the town," say the citizens in 1576, "are of the following description: they contain patios, and some of them are of a considerable elevation; they are built of mud and gessu." Great iron lattices tower gloomily above one's head; the huge screens of the old porches in the patios jut out, uneven, worn by the years. As I walk I read the names of the streets on the little name-plates with blue-tiled lettering. One of these gives me a sudden shock of surprise. Imagine it! I read: Calle de Dofia Celestina...I turn the corner and find on another little plate the name: Plazuela de Cervantes. This is arresting, momentous; I must be standing in front of the novelist's very house. Stationed before the gateway, I peer in at this extraordinary, portentous house. But an old woman -- one of those wordless old countrywomen in black -- comes from the background towards me. "Perhaps," I say to myself, "someone like me -- quite unknown -- would be committing a grave indiscretion if he were to enter a strange house." I take off my hat, bow, and say: "Excuse me; I am just looking at the house." The lady in black invites mein. And hereupon -- by some psychological process that you are familiar with -- just as it had previously seemed extravagant for me to go into a strange house, it now seems perfectly logical, the most natural thing in the world, that this lady should have invited me in. Everything, since the first nebular swarming of atoms, had been so disposed that a wordless woman should invite into her house a philosopher no less wordless. And I go with an easy mind. And when I encounter two men servants who seem to me unaffected and sensible, it is with the same simplicity and inevitableness that I exchange a few words with them. In front of the house is a patio with high walls and in the patio are a vine and a well; the pavement is of small round stones. Behind the patio stands the house; it has two wide doorways opening on a vestibule that runs the length of the facade. Billows of bright sunlight pour into this vestibule; a canary sings. I examine the two dark canvases on the wall: they portray Biblical scenes. Then we ascend a wide staircase on our right and find ourselves in a salon of the same size and shape as the vestibule on the floor below; the windows on the two large balconies are ajar; in the bright squares of sunlight on the floor stand plants in tubs symmetrically arranged. I divine the tender, busy hands of a woman. Everything is clean; everything is

orderly; the orderliness is ingenuous, frank, but, it must be admitted, tyrannical -- the orderliness one so constantly finds in provincial homes. We go through little doors and great panelled doors; it is a veritable labyrinth of reception-rooms, living-rooms, passages, bedrooms, one after the other, irregular and picturesque. Here is a quadrangular salon with its red furniture, in which a gentleman of 1830 looks at you from his frame over the sofa. Here is a narrow little doorway with a short passage leading to an iron balustrade over which Cervantes used to lean and gaze at the boundless, lonely, silent, monotonous, gloomy plain. Here is a bedroom with low doorway and glass chandelier: here Cervantes used to sleep with his bride. These whitewashed walls that I am staring at saw the passing of the ironist's happy hours.

I find myself downstairs again in the zagudn, sitting in the sunlight, among the green leaves of the shrubs. The canary sings, the sky is blue. I have already proclaimed it: everything, from the first nebular swarming of atoms, was disposed so that a philosopher might savour this moment's intimate contentment, in the vestibule of the house in which a great man's bride once lived. But something alarming -- perhaps it too was pre-ordained -- is invading my life. The inhabitants of this house have an exquisite courtesy: a few words were spoken in an adjoining room, and now I see coming towards me a charming girl. I rise, my emotions touched at the sight of her: she is the daughter of the house. And for the moment I see in this slender, self-contained girl -- who among us is always master of his fancies? -- the very daughter of Don Hernando Salazar, the very bride of Miguel de Cervantes. You see now that my emotion is justified? But something overpowering, rather frightening, curbs my imagination. The charming girl carries in one hand as she approaches me, a tray of cakes; in the other, a tray on which is a goblet of golden Esquivian wine; and at this point the small, tremendous conflict declares itself; this sort of thing is always happening in country-houses; my experience of provincial life -- as you have guessed already -- extricated me from the difficulty. "If I take one of these large cakes they make in the country," I told myself, "while I am eating it, since I cannot take the wine till I have finished it, this charming girl -- Cervantes' bride -- must wait before me -- an insignificant stranger." It would be an extravagance, would it not? Perhaps I did not notice the faint blush on her face as she came through the doorway? I took the smallest I could, of the broad household cakes, and gulped the wine quickly. The girl stood motionless, with cheeks aflame -- eyes cast down. And my thoughts, during the few moments of talk with this gracious courteous family, were with Catalina Salazar Palacios -- the lady of this house in 1584, the year of Cervantes' marriage -- and with Rosita Santos Aguado -- the lady of the house in 1904, one of the most sympathetic figures of the new century. My fancy identified the two, and when the moment came for me to take my leave, I looked once more, for the last time, as I stood in the door-

way under the blue sky among the flowers, at the pretty girl --
Cervantes' bride.

That evening I wanted to go to the fountain of Ombidales, near the town, where the woman Cervantes loved had had her vineyards. It had been ordained that I should go in company with the curé -- a worthy successor to Pérez, the priest who married Cervantes -- and with Don Andrés, the Mayorazgo. The vineyards once owned by the Salazar family no longer exist; the young vines of the Herrador, the Albillo, and the Espino vineyards have all been uprooted ; the well has its source in a ravine; a tiny thread of water falls from a long iron pipe fixed to a flagstone, and lies in two pools. Wide slopes scratched by the plough fall in gentle undulations on either side. The distance is closed in by a blue pencilling of mountains. Twilight overtakes us. "This," said the curé, "'is the lovers' walk of Esquivias." "Along here," added the Mayorazgo, with ironic emphasis, "when the crops are high, I have seen very many things, very strange things."

Night is drawing on; in the west the sky glows with the softness of mother-of-pearl. The immense, monotonous, grey, gloomy plain lies silent: behind a slope the dark roofs of a village can be seen. The stars shine as they shone the night before and through the whole bygone eternity of nights. And I think of the words which, in twilights such as these, among these melancholy plains, the master of irony spoke to the woman he loved -- simple, common words, grander words than any in his books.

POEM

BY ARCHIBALD MacLEISH

O Sun, instigator of cocks, Thou . . .

Quickener! Maker of sound in the leaves
and of running

Stir over the curve of the earth like the ripple of
Scarlet under the skin of the lizard! Hunter!
Starter of westward birds!

Be heard,
Sun, on our mountains! O be now
Loud with us! Wakener, let the wings
Descend of dawn on our roof-trees! Bring
Bees now! Let the cicadas sing

In the heat on the gummed trunks of the pine!
Make now the winds! Take thou the orchards!

(We who have heard our hearts beat in the silence
And the count of the clock all night at our listening ears)

Be near!
Shake the branches of day on our roofs! O
Be over us!

THE AFTERNOON

BY MERIDEL LE SUEUR

THE river shone through the budding trees; the opposite bank flared upwards and out over the moving water. The trees rose up in a thick forest, rose up like an army of Ethiopians with turbans of bright green. The man and the woman threaded their way over the black soft turf, carpeted delicately by the first May flowers that grew deep and secretly in the moss and underbrush. Ahead of them, around the bend of black-stemmed trees came a sound of falling water; it dropped thin and singing through the air and struck the ground with a sound as of flesh upon flesh. A damp odour rose from the ground; a dampness touched the hands serpent-like when the woman thrust hers deep in the secret leaves of the flower plants to pluck the white stems of May flowers; a blue mist rose stinging and steaming from the river; the trees looked wet with the turbulent rush of flowing sap mounting within them, as in veins when the blood is fast; the fragile heads of the flowers were anointed and upon pressure, dripped at their beheaded bodies a white juice. The buds the woman carried in her hands were golden and moist with a bitter honey which held them close, sealed them against too hasty disclosure and the new green looked wet as jade that is dipped in the sea. Everything, the entire magic world through which they walked, threading their way through the upstanding trees, looked like a reflection within water, as if born into being upon the body of water.

"Yashenka, why are you unhappy?" said the woman bending her head over the flowers, that cut from their course drooped over her hands.

He walked on, his eyes bent on the ground.

"I carry myself on my back, Meretchka, that is why I am unhappy."

They walked on between the trees...

"Look!" cried the woman suddenly. They stopped, alert as animals and peered through the perpendicular black bodies of the trees. Down the road in double file, with their heads bent and their black garments swinging about them, austere as the trees, marched the monks.

"They make me tremble, I don't like them. I am unhappy to look at them." She turned quickly to him.

"Why?"

"The church, Meretchka, and its oppression. All down the ages it has stood for falsehood, against science, against progress, even against life." She watched him, standing against the tree like some satyr, flaming and dark, his eyelids cutting down over his pupils sardonically. His brown hands were clenched.

"Yashenka, you're beautiful," she cried and moved against him.

Bewildered, he enclosed her in his arms, smiling vaguely. Thus they stood listening to the rhythmic feet of the monks as they wound out of sight between the trees.

Their departure left the forest space with a quiet that rose from the ground, with the rising of the trees, with the rising of the flowers and the first spring foliage. The man and woman stood, upright with the upright things, held within the quiet up-moving force.

"Yashenka, the tree is like a primaeval animal," Meretchka whispered in his ear which was close to her. She was reaching over his shoulder touching with singularly white hands the body of the tree. "It has ebony scales like a dragon. Put your hands on its body with mine."

He turned quickly and thrust her against the tree. She cried out sharply and clung to him, he threw back his head and startled the silence by his loud sudden laughter. He dropped his hands, and the woman moved away from him in alarm, scattering the flowers she carried, in the green lichen which her feet pressed. The man stopped his laughter suddenly and moved to the tree.

"Why are you afraid? Come here and look." He stooped beside the tree, touching the roots that swelled and swirled from the ground, distended beneath the black soil, swirling upward directly from the ground, rising steadily from the darkness and radiating outward. She came near in wonder and stooped beside him.

"Someone has wounded it here. Some little savage boy." He looked at her intently. "See its golden blood, congealed at the surface, and its white fibrous flesh."

"Yes, yes," she said. "Yes," she breathed, "could I touch it?" She put her fingers on the white and gold wound, gashed in the black bark; they both looked at the internal body of the tree without speaking, without even thinking.

Then both stood upright and silently looked at each other. They smiled and arm in arm walked on, turning in and out between the black-stemmed trees.

"Why are you laden with yourself?" Meretchka asked softly.

"What am I to do, what is there to do, what is one to do in America?"

"America," she answered, "is young, and crude yet, but how do you know that it does not offer the best opportunities for expression? Surely it is better than the decadence of Europe. . . . It is raw wine, but it is from good stock and it is not at any rate, too old."

He looked at her hopelessly and dropped his hands in dejection.

The dark ground gave under their feet, and from its damp side sprang the tiny May flowers, the first wild orchids; the fern was turning green; and from the dark tips of the trees shone and glistened the breaking buds. Across the gleaming river the black bodies of the trees slanted and rayed upward and outward, like distended veins; the bursting buds, caught and frail in the sunlight, seemed not to belong to the tree, but to surround it like a mist and to have descended upon the stumps of the trees like a flock of transparent wings.

"What do trees, these trees, remind you of?" Meretchka asked. The irritation of the last speeches still stung within them. He walked on, his gaze on the ground, and did not answer. She walked on holding the flowers and gazing at him half humorously though with full understanding, from beneath her dark brows.

"Do you know what they remind me of?"

"What?" he said in a deep voice.

"Look at that unbelievable bright brass green. It looks like a design of hammered brass, very delicately done, with inlay of ebony to mark the trunks and branches."

His eyes brightened, his shoulders moved as they always did when his sensibilities were touched. "That's fine," he said. It was almost as if it pained him. "It's fine. It's good to say things right, isn't it? Isn't it good?"

They came to a bridge.

"Are we going over the bridge?" the woman asked, looking across, with the bright reflection of the water playing over her face.

He looked at her keenly. "Yes, does that too mean something extraordinary to you? You endow everything with meaning."

"It has meaning." She spoke with fervour. "I do not like you to say that. I do not endow things. They are endowed already. Before I am they were. I can only look at them deeply." He took her hand and they walked across the bridge, the water, placid, reflecting them when they leaned over, reflecting mystically the trees, the floating clouds, the birds flying over.

A breeze blew upon them, a breeze that smelled of water. When it struck them they became exhilarated and breathed deeply, and laughed. The woman stopped and turned her face straight to the sun and stretched her arms over her head. He watched her smiling.

"Yashenka," she said, stretching her neck and feeling the gold heat on her closed lids, "must you save the world? Must you?"

His face darkened, his lids lowered over his eyes.

"I cannot be happy, while there is injustice, poverty in the world." She could see him through the gold heat in her half closed eyes -- his red lips tightened, his hair, growing on his head wiry and black like a wolf's, moved in the wind, over his proud head, full over the eyes; low on his cheeks there appeared a flush of colour. . . » He stood looking down, awkward with the force of his emotions.

Suddenly she took his hands and they ran over the bridge, onto the opposite bank and went clattering over the white stones, in the winding path which led to the water's edge. He caught her on the path in front of a cave and they went on down the path breathing hard... .

The trees in the river marshes were large, rising upward on giant stems, showering the sky with their bright green delicate foliage.

"Yasha, what do trees remind you of?" He looked at them silently, almost timidly, but did not answer. "What do they re-

mind you of ? Why don't you tell me? Can't you tell me? . . .
You don't really see them unless you know what they are like,
unless you can say them."

"I don't know what they are like," he said simply.

She was impatient. "Oh, you do. Try to say them."

He hesitated. "What do you think they are like?"

"They are oriental," she said lavishly. "They are like designs by
Léon Bakst for a Russian Ballet, for let us say, Schéhérazade, black,
jet black, swathed trunks, bright, brass oriental green foliage . .
like Ethiopians with turbans of verdigris: . . ."

He did not look at them. "I do not know whether they are
oriental. I do not know that." After a silence he said shyly, "You
know what they make me think of? I'm just saying this. . .
this is just my opinion...Of course trees make me think of
this. Trees make me think that they are all there, you know. That
they stand up of themselves. For a long time, longer than I stand
up." She took his hand in gratitude for that; they wandered down
a road which ran between the enormous rising black fountains of
trees.

"We wander quite carelessly, don't we? As if the world were
all quite right." He smiled at her not sure that she wasn't making
fun of him. "It's as if there were justice. One can believe in jus-
tice here. Even you?"

He did not answer. There was no solace in nature for him.
She felt that too. It was almost as if he believed in injustice, as
if he were a fanatic of injustice.

"Yasha, when you came out of the penitentiary, how did the
world look -- it must be like being born again."

"Shall we cross the ferry here? I want to take you down the
other side. When I came out of the gates the world was pretty wide
I can tell you, so much sky and so much earth was like a benediction.
I never believed in benediction before." He cupped his hands to
his mouth and in a deep voice, that resounded down the river, he
hallooed for the ferryman. She sat down on the damp bank.

"I suppose that is the voice you used to use on the soap-box."

"Get up off the damp ground, Meretchka."

The ferryman was a young boy with fat red cheeks who before
they got across was puffing and panting and sweating. The water

swirled and eddied beneath them and sucked around the edges of the boat. On the opposite bank the road sprang up from the river bed, mounted a hill, and rambled away into a stretch of woods, on the river bluff...

To their right, the land was in the process of being cleared. The trees lay on the ground, leaving the stumps of their roots, white, circling in hard fibre around the pith. The trees lay sadly on the ground, their half-sprung buds drying on them. They passed the felled trees and came to a forest standing upright, far as one could see, receding back and away into impenetrable shadow, coming directly upward, and from their sides sprang the limbs, and from the limbs, arching against the sky above, and over the shadow beneath, was springing the tiny substance of the leaf. The shadow beneath these arteries, and existing between them was so palpable as to almost suggest a body. The ground was damp and bare and cold, the stripped body of the tree rose directly from it. They stood silently, a forest of these bodies retreating into shadow, advancing to the road, standing by the road.

They trembled and went hurriedly through, and out into the sunlight again, and into the sight of the gleaming river, and the verdigris trees.

A young boy ahead of them ran after his father and mother. He had a bow made of a river reed, and arrows made of the white hollow reeds; he shot them upwards, they arched and fell in the grasses by the road, and he went shouting after them.

A soldier came out of the forest behind them startling them when they turned suddenly -- he had a young girl in a bright cap in his arms, and turned and kissed her loudly; then they both laughed, the girl shrieked and ran back into the forest, he hesitated a moment, looked around and followed her, his heavy boots clattering and receding as they lost sight of him in the black forest.

A hill rose perpendicular against the road...Small trees pressed against its sides, high up at its crest the white flowers of the blood-root leaned out of the shadow into the slant of sunlight, which fell from the west. On the wide summit of the hill stood an old stone church.

They followed the road, which turned and mounted the side of the hill to the village which lay in the ravine. When they saw a path cut off and ascend through the brush, they followed it, being plunged immediately into damp shadow; the wet ends of the brush whipped against them, the tanglements of the brush, with their slender stems and tendrils, wound together in the shadow in thick design and descended to the earth, where they tangled and wound about each other as they entered the ground. They bent their

backs and, one in front of the other, went through the tunnel of tangled brush silently and emerged on the other side at the foot of a flight of granite steps which ascended the hill directly to the stone church.

Half way up Yasha turned, full of admiration. He liked vistas.

"Isn't that fine?" He pointed to the country, the tilled ground, the forests, the river moving through the blind earth, and beyond it, the steel city, jutting into the sunny sky. "It's fine."

"But why is it? Why is life?" he said. "I don't understand it, I don't see any reason for it. Do you know?" She saw he was fervent and real. He was not being either merely young, or merely dramatic. Strange Russian temperament, she thought. There was sadness in his question...He didn't know. Did it delight him to taste the flavour of this sad bewilderment, this mysterious secret of life?

"Why ask what it is about?" She threw the wilted flowers she had been carrying onto the ground. "It's enough to be, isn't it?"

"No, it isn't. One must do something, become something, know for certain where one is going!"

"Don't you really see the goal, Yasha? I mean outside of the attitude, there is a certain pleasure in sadness, in that futility about life."

"I'm not being dramatic, Meretchka. That's the way I feel."

After they had neared the summit he said, "What is the goal?"

She thought of several things to say, but walked on instead, swinging the budding branch she carried.

The church stood on the hill before them, a simple stone building with a steeple above the little door. The hill was very high, the air was clear, and the sun seemed near there. Far below the river appeared from the fields and disappeared into the bluff of the black forest. The white flowers of the blood-root grew on the precipice, and around the church in the broad clearing the grass was new and bright green. In front of the door of the church a group of children stood...Two little girls in big hats that fell to the back of their necks were murmuring catechism from little black dirty books they clutched in their hands...Three boys, in black shining suits, stood nervously by. Another little girl in a polka-dot dress, stood on one foot while she held the other behind her, in her cupped hands. She hobbled around in the sun, her pigtailed flapping against her back. They had stopped together.

Around the corner of the church, dressed in long black monk's habit, came the priest. He was very tall, and his body curved delicately, while his head was set graciously. His hands were ascetic and veined sharply, where they hung at his sides and he raised the right one to bless the children. The two little girls got up and put their fingers in their mouths. His face was narrow with deep-shadowed eyes, and his head was bald and high except for a furze of white hair which rimmed his skull. His garments swung around him as he rapidly approached the children.

"Look at his head and face," Meretchka whispered; "'Titian was right. I have never seen that warm flesh tint on men, that pure flesh tint."

The children gathered round him, looking up at him. To see him they had to look straight up, bend their necks far back as if they were looking at the sky.

They could not hear what he said to the children. Only the deep chant of his voice reached them, and the children's answers, in chorus, loud and shrill. Yes. No. The sun shone on his bare head, and he was bending and gracious to the children. At last he turned, and held the wooden door of the church open and the children raised themselves on tiptoe, looked at him apprehensively, and went under his arm into the church.

"Come, let us go in too." Her face was flushed, her lips parted, and she pulled him to the door on tiptoe too, like the children.

"No, no," he said, "I'll wait for you. I don't like to go in churches."

"Oh, yes, come, don't be foolish. Utter foolishness! The church is very old -- it will be strange inside."

"Do I have to throw away my walking-stick?"

"No, no, come."

"I don't belong in churches, Meretchka, they embarrass me."

They had already entered the vestibule, which was of wood and smelled musty. Meretchka, with the same strange apprehension and awe that had been on the children's faces, opened the second wooden door that led into the church. And they stepped inside.

It was a small church with wooden ribs. The altar was bright. The figures were small and in light colours of red and blue and

pink...There were stars behind the altar. A bland staThe of the virgin, with a small, pink face, was nearest them. The stations of the cross were rather gay figures, despite the anguish of the faces. Here was not a sad religion, of anguish and passion, but a beneficent, even gay one. The altar cloths were tatted, and crocheted, edged with home-made lace; the crucifix at the right of the altar was in white with a bland figure on it with a bright red scarf around his thighs; the face was in anguish but it was a symbolic anguish, quite without pain. The sunlight came in through the windows and fell on the children who sat bolt upright in a line, in a pew in the centre of the church. The girls peered round at them as they came in and whispered to each other and resumed their stiff little attitudes. The priest had gone to the parish-house, which was a big wooden house behind the church.

He came back from behind the altar. There was a kind of excitement about him...He had some papers in his hands, and came towards them. He bent over them. They could see his face and head against the stained glass window behind him. The skin was unbelievably delicate, and the veins arched within his temples. The eyes, in the shadowed recesses, were small and kindly, but a little vacant. His mouth was quite old. His habit was stained down the front and his hands were dirty as if he had been digging in soil.

"Are you Catholic?" he asked, gazing past them and waiting for no answer. "I will give you some of these. They are very interesting reading. I can see the young man is an abstainer." Meretchka stole a glance at Yasha. He blushed gracefully.

The priest handed them some yellow ancient-looking manifestoes, fumbled with those he had left, mumbled that he had only a few of that certain kind, and took away from Yasha two that he had given him. Then he straightened up, folding his hands instinctively, and went to the children. They all strained up their necks towards him and he began to hear their catechism. Yasha and Meretchka rose and shut the door on the excited chanting of the children, in "Hail Mary, full of grace."

Out in the brilliant light the manifestoes looked very quaint and ancient. They strolled over the edge of the hill and sat down on the grass.

On one of the manifestoes was an engraving of a mediaeval saint, with a dotted halo around his head, and underneath was a mediaeval convert -- how he broke himself of drink; his life; his visions; the story of the little cup he carried out of which he must always drink.

Yashenka withdrew from the papers and sat looking out over

the river vista.

"Do you believe all that, Meretchka?" he finally asked despairingly.

"Monks believe in something. I believe in any belief, Yasha. It's as authentic as your revolutionary passion. Don't you say so? There may be monks who are charlatans just as there are revolutionary henchmen. Why not? Don't be bitter."

He moved his shoulders impatiently and sat beating the ground with his walking-stick.

Meretchka leaned over and put her hand on his. "Don't beat the earth."

He looked at her intently. "Don't you believe in anything?"

She did not answer and turned her face away.

He questioned her further. "What is the goal then?"

It was such a vast question. She hesitated. Then she took the budding branch she carried and held it before him.

"That is the goal," she said pointing to the buds. His face was still dull, dark with hate and wrong. "Take it in your hands."

"I don't want to," he muttered, looking at the thick ground.

"Yasha, take it in your hands. Yasha, you are afraid of creation." There was silence between them as she held before him the branch springing from itself, breaking itself into myriad life. At last without looking he held out his hand, and she gave him the budding branch. He did not raise his eyes but held it from him.

"Look at it."

At last he raised his eyes to her.

The malice had gone from him and he laid his head against her. She touched his hair.

At last he muttered from the grass, "I don't know how to believe in creation." She did not answer but touched his hair, put her hands deep within his hair, and felt the blood throb into the scalp.

The sun burned on them, penetrated them. After the winter pallor, the lustiness of the heat almost made them sick. They sat quite still, the heat sinking into them. As if the very body of the

sun set in them, moved within them from horizon to horizon. The woman thrust her hands through his hair and he lay quite still. How dark he was, she thought, with his face buried in the earth. After all what a subterranean dark creature he was. Burrowing through the passages of bewilderment and hate. Dark. Dark. Like a stubborn animal, fighting the world. Valiant dark animal.

"What are you thinking?" she asked him.

He raised his face to her; it was flushed from the heat and printed with the stains of the grass. "Don't let's talk -- just this dark body of the earth . . . the heat... ." He dropped his head again. Far below them on the mystic surface of the river she watched a fisherman row out and lay his net, circling about back to the black soft shore; then he pulled it in slowly, laden with fish, and they flashed their sinuous water bodies in the sun; once he picked up a giant turtle and with all his strength flung it back into the water and for a moment it was like an ancient design upon the sky, an old hieroglyph of Egyptians or Toltecs...The sun naked in the sky threw out terrific heat. The flesh was now heated to unbelievable sensation. The brain took on the same sensation of heat waves . . . the whole organism was burned to this heat. The river was placid and reflected the sun. The leaves of the trees seemed to have opened out. On the hillside below them a man lay with a paper over his face, and a woman in a bright blouse lay asleep in the curve of his out-flung arm. Children's voices came up from the village which lay secure from the primaeval heat, in the moist curve of the hills.

"Yasha, the heat of the sun turns the vision black," Meretchka said very low. "It chars the body." He raised his head and put it in her lap.

"I am so happy," he said. "You believe, don't you, that I want to believe in creation?" She kissed his forehead.

"We had better go. It's four miles to the mushroom caves." They rose, with difficulty defining the lines of their being, the familiar movements of the body in stretching, standing, and walking.

"A very little more," Meretchka said, laughing comically, "and we should have been sun ecstasies, utterly mad."

Their path home led along the river bluffs. With the city ahead of them in its mist, the river below and the fields beyond the river, and the forests marching alongside. Meretchka went up all the ravines, plucking flowers. Yasha went straight along standing stock-still when she darted off on excursions, remaining in thought until she returned with flowers which she gave him to smell.

"If I could get enough money to be free so that I could study. Do you think one could play the commercial game, with all the crooked rules and not be contaminated by it, do you?"

"I don't know. Have you been able to do it, any of you? Some of you in jail, your valuations broken."

"Yet I am not going to work eight hours a day as I did when I was a kid, when I first came to America. I'll starve first."

She took his hand and they walked on.

"What can we do?' She didn't know.

"When I am alone, I am so happy, or with you. Then to make adaptations to that city." He pointed out to the smoke mist that rose from the city. They stopped hand in hand.

"You are something entirely different down there...When we first came from Russia to that city, we lived in the river bottoms; then we moved up in the Jewish neighbourhood, and I sold papers, and Russian tea, and blacked boots, and sold violets to the prostitutes on the river front. I had to learn the vulgarities. I had to learn how to be American. How to bluff. How to lie, to cheat, to overcharge, to steal. I don't know what it all means. I lose myself there. Do you think I like getting drunk, Meretchka? But we all get drunk. Getting drunk is the only privilege we have. Getting drunk and bawling about the revolution."

The old sullen sardonic look was on his face. The sun flushed it.

"Suffering is a beautiful heritage of your race, Yasha. Your race are geniuses when they can turn their suffering to creation instead of destruction."

"Can you imagine, Meretchka? You can't, you're so sure of your love, of your friendly universe; but imagine being pitted against a world. You feel it's you or the other guy. There isn't any good thing left in you. . . ."

He continued after they had walked towards the city for some minutes. "I got so I didn't believe in myself. I wouldn't be caught uttering a beautiful phrase. We learned poetry and used to walk all night, after we got a little liquor in us, reciting poetry to ourselves. We lived at night. Like the Jews in the pogroms or in their underground dives in Spain. Did you ever hear the Jewish chants?" He stopped and turned to the river away from her, with his head lowered. He felt self-conscious, singing. So she didn't look at him. The sun was just setting. Shadows lay across

the river.

There came from him the low moans and chants, dirges from centuries of suffering. The rolling strange words, the minor chords, the eerie half notes. When he finished a cold ascended from the river. The sun had entirely disappeared.

He turned and came close to her. "They are so low and minor because they had to be sung in secret. That is why they are so dark."

The sky seemed to open for them -- the space below and above too vast -- so they turned into the dark ways of the forest... The dark secret odour of the earth came up around them -- the bodies of the trees rose into the air at every hand. The sky was shut out, the black limbs creaked and moved slowly above them.

He drew her down at the roots of a large tree that rose up in impenetrable twilight. The city was hidden from them. They sat close together, quite silent. A bird flew past them now and then -- or a bat -- and the shadows deepened.

He whispered to her, "When we were leaving Russia our baggage was on the carriage, we were going to America, it was early in the morning, so that the dew still hung from everything. I was a little boy and my father had a great beard. We went out over the fields past the Volga, past everything I had known since my birth. It was as if I were dying to be born again in some strange country. And then from across the river, from a distance came the sound of a flute, clear and high. And my heart turned inside me, melted, moved out...It was a shepherd from the hills with his flock, my father told me, yet I cried, tears ran down my face. And my mother scolded me and my father bellowed at me...I feel like that now . . . I feel like weeping. As if you played to me a flute, a strange thing that made my heart, after its long sourness, turn sweetly and move and weep. Come near me, Meretchka. Move into me."

They lay weeping in each other's arms as the afternoon faded and the night, like a flock of beneficent birds, flew above them, came down upon them, nested over them, so they rested in the shadow of its dark and winded wings.

A RHETORIC OF INTUITION

BY CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

The Realm of Essence: Book First of Realms of Being. By George

Santayana. 8vo. 183 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.50.

THERE is another system of philosophy," are the words with which, in *Scepticism and Animal Faith*,¹ his introductory volume, Mr Santayana opens his present philosophical considerations. It is a somewhat ironical deprecation, doubtless, in more than one respect. The system, as he goes on to suggest, is less "another" than one we already know, to a degree. His attempt is to resolve and elucidate that great tacit body of philosophy which in every age civilized men have been able, more or less, to make out for themselves, according to their degrees of competence and courage, and to hold to -- a system, parts of which are the stable common elements of innumerable formal philosophies otherwise at odds. His declaration is surely to be attentively received, even though he may be speaking of his own offerings, for he has more than once shown himself to be his own most detached and observant critic. If he has aimed here at a human orthodoxy which should be fundamental and final in its relation both to the ideal and the actual, he would seem to have done so with a clear and thorough consciousness of all that the varieties of modern thought in every sphere imply in the direction of human change and possibility.

The philosopher, he suggests, must attain and must maintain himself upon the crest of a great divide in his own human nature, a watershed overlooking his natural animal faith on the one hand, and on the other the scepticism that must arise from the conflict of his various animal beliefs in the world of matter. The mass of men probably do not of themselves much dwell in this upper solitude of introspection. They inhabit rather, the contentious valleys of belief; are lapped about with one credo or another, dwellers in "the flux of substance," knowing nothing, indeed dreaming nothing of the realm of essence -- in which all the possibilities of being are individual and eternal -- except as the accidents of matter call forth one essence or other for their intuition. Achievement of this divide in mental being is signaled by recognizing all one's knowledge as no more than various forms of faith; and yet it is accompanied by the realization that complete scepticism is incompatible with our nature as spiritual beings in a material world, for as living spirits we touch at once two realms, the realm of matter and the realm of essence.

Yet there is nothing mystical about such a concept: ""The realm of essence is not peopled by choice forms or magic powers. It is simply the unwritten catalog, prosaic and infinite, of all the characters possessed by such things as happen to exist." . . . "Essence is anything that might be found, every quality of being." .. . "Distinction, infinitely minute and indelible distinction of everything from everything else, is what essence is." That these statements possess, indeed, potentiality in extenso, the reader will be

aware who follows out their specific, dispassionate, and magnificent elaboration. Mr Santayana's system is perhaps less a system than a great (and difficult) attitude, a regimen of intuition; it is less a pronouncement than a principle of criticism. Least of all, surely, is it anything which can be set down as dogma. And if the axioms upon which it is founded are to be thought of as verbal, then the word verbal must be recognized as having a massive significance in our human development, biologically, it must seem -- as intellectually. Distinction and expression, necessarily verbal performances, are inextricably involved in those powers of wonder and thought which have parted man so abruptly off from the rest of the animal world. The realm of essence may be no more than a universe of terms or characters, but it is also no less than the sine qua non which makes man more than a simple creature of hunger and matter. The appreciation of essences is an act of spirit, and this present philosophy by distinction -- which is modern though not new -- becomes a great rhetoric of intuition, guided in the first instance, as a reader of Scepticism and Animal Faith must be aware, by the principle that man can be no better secured against illusion and its consequences than by recognizing and allowing for the fact that so long as his mind dwells in the realm of matter, it is the fool of its senses and its animal brain.

If a philosophy is modern which has pertinence to our current states of spirit, then Mr Santayana's philosophy is modern in a significant sense. We have not often required philosophy so generally as we require it now, philosophy especially in the sense of something by means of which the finer vistas of our interior being may be reasserted. Perhaps humanity was never before so sharply dislodged from its existing mental habit as it has been in the last half of the nineteenth century by that ever augmenting avalanche of thought in which Darwin rolled so tremendous a first stone. As a consequence we have come to think we shall not want again, philosophies that wall us in by means of our egoism, and so we fly to the dogmas of science, of which we know nothing -- as short-sighted possibly as any we have left. Surely at this present juncture we have need for philosophers cognizant of the armoury of thought that science makes possible, yet not of such easy intellectual virtue as to yield them utterly to the blandishments of the scientific dogma. That such a need could be satisfied in the philosophy here before us seems evident both from the critical genius of Mr Santayana's excursions and from the specific orientations he accomplishes while about them.

Mr Santayana has been a soliloquist his life long, it would appear, and he still is one. Thus the great opulence of his present thought may very possibly impress the reader as being addressed subtly and splendidly to itself alone. As one could before, one may again, simply overhear an iridescent monologue, except that what were certainly never journeyman contemplations, are now

presented in a final maturity and mastery. Mr Santayana's inaccessibility has sometimes been laid at the door of his style, which, shaped and matchless though it is, seems at times to interpose the supremacy of its phrasing between the meaning and the reader. The import is often remote, but in the way only that philosophy generally is remote -- from the casual, customary, and more or less "animal" concerns to which our minds are habituated. Rather than his style it might well be the unprepared reader who is ill-assorted to his purposes. For if one consider philosophy not merely as the exercise of dialectic, but as a profound discipline in contemplation and intuition, then few modern spokesmen of the spirit are as absolutely philosophical as Mr Santayana. His effect may be, as it has been, in inverse ratio to the number of his readers; yet one cannot but continue to believe that this great poet of the rational will long be a major influence on thought. Doubtless he could have been more accessible -- by becoming more customary and casual -- but it would probably have been at the expense of the disciplines which produced *The Life of Reason* and the present *Realms of Being*. It may not be soon that we shall have another reconciliation of the ideal and the actual as firm and clear and far as this is; or a reassertion as just, of the powers and prowess of spirit.

² Reviewed in [The Dial, September, 1923.](#)

CHANGE

BY J. I. N. NEUGAS

The afternoon is late, and the snow in the park
is melting, although the sunlight has lost its
heat

Everyone is enjoying the snow in the people's
park before it melts; and the time-light of day,
before it changes

The vertical sky in disappointed colours is an
above sea sky and they have lighted the arc-lamps
too early

Soon it will be dark.
I do not wish this. For if it stayed . .

A KNIGHT-ERRANT

BY ALEXANDER BAKSHY



Charlie Chaplin, c.1918

THOSE who induced Charlie Chaplin to try the movies, did not suspect him of being more than a "funny man," though he came from the vaudeville stage -- the stage which still preserves some of the great traditions of "pure" acting. In vaudeville he learned how to create an image and convey emotion by a movement of the body, a twist of the head, or a doll-like fixedness of expression ; from vaudeville also he has carried the sense of dramatic composition; the use of emphasis in a portrait portrayal, the appreciation of rhythmic pattern, the knowledge of the exact location for the dramatic accent. Had he stopped with this and remained merely a master of technique, he would have achieved something rare in the motion picture. But he went farther. He created a character -- a creature entirely fantastic, utterly impossible in real life, yet so human, so lovable in its childish naiveté and pathetic helplessness, so uproariously humorous in its grotesque ingenuities that it has acquired significance equal to that of any of the historic types of the stage.

And now *The Circus*. The poor tramp; fame and fortune; hunger for food; hunger for friendliness and love.

He has unwittingly got into trouble with the police, attempts to escape, and loses them and himself in a mirror-maze. He disguises himself as one of the front-side specimens of a Noah's Ark, but is discovered and chased into a circus. In saving himself from the police he has incidentally become a member of the troupe and has caught an egg for breakfast by chasing a hen, when a fair lady in distress, a circus equestrian, puts him in his proper stride as the gallant knight-errant that he truly is. A knight-errant, a love-lorn Pierrot, an impish harlequin, our hero then proceeds to reveal himself in a series of episodes among which are two feats of inspiration : a scene in a lion's cage and a scene in which he walks a tight-rope with the help of a disguised cable. This latter scene,

however, includes a struggle with monkeys which strikes a somewhat alien, discordant note. Its scarcely premeditated effect may be ascribed to the change in the dramatic style of the scene which from a situation artificial and farcical passes into realism and borders upon tragedy.

Descent from the tight-rope -- the climax of the story -- and the downward slide of fortune are simultaneous and he "is gradually fired" -- a gross exaggeration. Poor and helpless he will not allow the fair lady of his heart to join her fortunes with his but restores her instead, to his more prosperous rival and quietly withdrawing from the selfish people who no longer need him, resumes his lonely wanderings through the world.

The sad ending of the play is significant. The tragic mask is increasingly apparent in the comic make-up of the waif whom the world has so tenderly taken to its heart. The irresponsible harlequin is receding. The tendency may or may not enrich Mr Chaplin's art. But if it is true that each new film reveals an ever growing maturity of thought, one would welcome similar progress in the "direction." *The Circus* is neat and competent but here as previously, its author has failed fully to rise to the opportunity placed before him by the extraordinarily fantastic world of the character he has created. The great screen genius of our time should not be afraid to find for the play as a whole, the fully expressive visual form he has found for himself.

ITALIAN LETTER

April, 1928

by RAFFAELLO PICCOLI

RICCARDO BACCHELLI is one of the writers of the Roman Ronda who soon after the war tried to found a new literary movement, establishing it on Italian literary tradition, as recognized by them especially in certain aspects of Leopardi's work. The movement of which some of my readers may remember that I have spoken in a former letter was soon styled, mainly by its adversaries, Neo-classic, and seemed one of the many reactions or revulsions of that confused period -- a reaction in particular against all the ideals for which Futurism stood.

A common programme often masks rather than reveals the character of individual writers, since emphasis laid on the voluntary, programmatic elements of art conceals that individual quality which can find expression only in the unconscious, involuntary substance of the work. For a long time only Cecchi and Baldini seemed really worthy of attention among the writers of the Ronda. Bac-

chelli's recent novel, however, *Il Diavolo al Pontelungo*, places its author in the front of the group, if it is still possible to regard as a group that which may have been little more than a passing coincidence of polemic interests.

Through his laborious and tormented work as a critic of literature and of the arts, Emilio Cecchi has created for himself out of his very scruples and perplexities, a style fastidious and involved, delicate and at the same time vehement and has not been without influence on a whole generation of younger writers. His hesitating and tentative use of words, a way all his own of saying and unsaying, as if he were afraid continually of revealing and abandoning too much of himself, and were never quite sure of his own thought beyond that point which suggests a reasonable reticence ; his disdain for clear and definite expression, as if words outworn by a long literary tradition could not reconquer their expressive virginity except through the most subtle and complicated alchemy; all these characteristics of his style are to be found, transmuted into fashions and mannerisms, in a good many of the writers who began their career after the war; and as this stylistic attitude is similar, if not in its forms, at least in its roots and motives, to some of the recent literary fashions of France -- one might say that Cecchi is in modern Italian literature analogous to Giraudoux -- Cecchi's influence ends by merging with that of the younger French writers whose prose rhythms are inspiring a whole eyrie of half-writers and half-journalists of our own. As for Cecchi himself, that which gives its peculiar flavour to his style, that which in fact makes a true writer of him, is even that same inhibition which more often keeps him from writing: his best pages are to be looked for in his short essays and fantasies, pauses, as it were, and interludes in his critical labours, such as are collected in his *Pesci Rossi* of a few years ago, and in the *Osteria del Cattivo Tempo*, which is his last book (1927). Times like ours are great devourers of possible poets -- where a watchful (too watchful) critical sense, and a vast experience of European literatures from the Greek poets to Proust and Joyce, produce, as is the case with Cecchi, such high exigencies, such an insatiable consciousness of aesthetic values, that every initial rhythm or music is broken and discarded even before it has had time to describe its parabola and be wholly itself. Cecchi's prose style draws its minute and many-coloured splendour from a multitude of fragments and remnants of poetry not realized as song, representing and testifying to this torment of inhibition.

Baldini, at least at first sight, is as confident and felicitous and open-hearted as Cecchi is tormented and laborious and reticent. Beyond Leopardi and his lucid and solemn, thoughtful and musical prose, he has more or less consciously joined hands with certain exquisitely polished but not entirely artificial writers of the seventeenth century, like Padre Daniello Bartoli and Lorenzo Maga-

lotti, and, further back, with our story-tellers and minor poets of the late Trecento and of the Renaissance -- in search of a style voluntarily simple and debonair; of a vision of life thoroughly Italian, provincial and discreet; shy of great words as of great thoughts; free from every excess both of virtue and of vice; epicurean in practice and delicately refined in the consciousness of its self-imposed simplicity. In such a vision of life as well as in certain formal aspects of his art, the immediate predecessor of Baldini is Alfredo Panzini -- with Pirandello, one of the older men who have found their way and their fortune in the last few years, issuing from that mediocrity which had been a seal upon the greater part of their literary life. Having kept faith with the old tradition and with the inheritance of Carducci, but in a minor tone, through the years and revolutionary fashions preceding the war, Panzini came at last into his own when that which in him was still nature and continuation, began to appear to the young as a conscious artifice and a reactionary innovation. This particular moment coincided for him with the full maturity of a mind naturally kind and candid and witty, in love with the smaller and humbler things of life, and capable of a pathos neither vast nor deep, but intimate and sometimes intense. Some of his books, like *Santippe* and *La Lanterna di Diogene*, belonging to this happy period, have endeared him even to unsophisticated readers. But his more recent work seems to reveal a kind of languor, as of a writer to whom his own style has become a model and a pattern; and the natural wit which was quite adequate to a narrow and provincial milieu, loses its flavour and becomes an affectation of naiveté when applied to that different and wider life among which his very fortune as a writer has brought him. Panzini is a characteristic instance of the *audator temporis acti*, and the unaccountable behaviour of the girl of to-day, so different from that of the girls of his own youth, fills him with an indignation too insistent to conceal the traces of frustrated desires and vain regrets. Apart from these personal and practical elements in his art, elements of weakness and uncertainty, as are all desires not sublimated into a poetic vision, the later Panzini is more and more detaching himself from his original inspiration, and changing into a follower of the school which he himself inaugurated. Baldini's work, like Cecchi's, though much more abundant, consists of but short essays and fantasies, which in his case however are not remnants or interludes of poetry, but poetry itself. There lives again in him, together with the style, the character also of the old Italian *letterato*, who addressed himself to his subject, ambitious of adorning it with every grace. You might say that for him no subject is imposed by internal necessity, no subject is intrinsic to him, and that between one and another of these short prose poems, of these plaquettes or painted tiles, there is no other relation than is given by a hand acquiring greater and greater skill; which, having stamped a given portion of matter with its impress, is continually seeking new matter on which it may employ its dexterity. For a writer of this kind, the journalistic profession cannot help being

harmful, since, as the reasonable exercise of a technical capacity makes it more expert and refined, so the excessive use tends to make it duller and blunter. Many Italian writers once professors are now journalists. But Baldini's war-diary, *Nostro Purgatorio*, and the two volumes containing his earlier essays and fantasies, *Umori di Gioventù* and *Salti di Gomitolo*, are well worth reading, and so is Michelaccio, his most ambitious work; a short novel which reminds one of *Bertoldo* by Giulio Cesare della Croce, the masterpiece of our folk-literature of the seventeenth century. Michelaccio embodies in a proverbial type of plebeian and unheroic epicurean, that vision of old Italian life to which we have alluded. Even this book however is substantially but a collection of detached fantasies, among which one at least is truly happy and unforgettable, the imaginary meeting of Michelaccio with Ludovico Ariosto on a journey through the Apennines.

While speaking of Cecchi and Baldini, and endeavouring to define the nature of their minds as also of their art, we seem to be occupied mainly with considerations of a formal, stylistic order. It almost appears as if in times of doubt and transition, a kind of division of labour should become the rule of literary life, some writers concentrating their efforts on the pure problems of expression, and working merely to create the means by which others, more fortunate or less tormented, shall actually succeed in expressing themselves. But no writer, after such adventures and experiments, ought to be accorded recognition unless the quality of his work shows that, either through assimilation or consciously, he has digested the fruit of these apparently sterile labours. In this light, the function of Cecchi, Baldini, and a few other such "experimental" writers will have been that of a generation which, appearing on the stage when the clamour and the blaze of the dazzling and high-pitched d'Annunzian performance were already waning, has tried to make itself heard and seen through a lowering of the literary tone and through the presentation of more humble, concrete, and intimate aspects of reality. Thus it happens that, while d'Annunzio is still the officially recognized Laureate of Italy, in these younger writers as well as in Panzini and in Pirandello, we meet with moral and literary tendencies thoroughly different from, when not actually opposed to, the tendencies prevailing in the practical life of their country: and this is after all as it should be, since the practical world is a mirror receiving delayed and diminished images from the higher worlds of thought and poetry.

But at last, out of the circle of the Ronda, a book has come, a real book which is one of the most notable novels published in Italy in recent times. With Riccardo Bacchelli we associate an ambitious, laborious, sophisticated recasting of Hamlet, published in the Ronda in 1919; and those *Poemi Lirici* of which I spoke in my last letter, minute and laborious also, and intimately unlyrical: quaint experiments in which the old Italian hendecasyllable, the

most venerable among the living metres of European poetry, and therefore the one which exacts the greatest poetical energy in order to be made to live effectually, was decomposed and as it were loosened into its essential accents and, when not of purely descriptive and psychological prose, reduced to a kind of vers jibre. These early attempts had been followed by other dramatic essays and by a volume of imaginative prose, *Lo Sa il Tonno*, in none of which however had we been able to discover a writer more than pertinaciously devoted to his art or one able to express his personality with an accent and voice indubitably his own. The Diavolo al Pontelungo is a long novel, the scene of which is laid partly in Switzerland and partly in Italy, around the figure of the aged Bakunin and the first internationalistic movements after the realization of Italian unity; and it is in manipulating such unexpected and uninviting materials that Bacchelli succeeds at last in reaping the harvest of a long and patient literary apprenticeship. With Bakunin and his young Italian friend and disciple Cafiero, a whole world of cranks and fanatics from all the ends of Europe, from the prisons of the Czars or from the barricades of the Commune, lives and talks and plots in a perpetual oscillation between wildest hope and darkest despair -- Cafiero having devoted his entire fortune to an unsuccessful communist experiment and to Bakunin, its leader. The atmosphere of those grey, uncertain times, of that dawn of the long peace which was to be concluded in the Dammerung of the great war, is caught with an alert and sensitive intelligence, and with an art capable of individualizing all its multiple and confused elements in a crowd of sharply defined personalities and characters. The deterioration of the ideal in the daily uses of life is studied and represented against the idyllic background of Swiss landscape -- a setting which constitutes a kind of continuous lyrical accompaniment to a story in itself sad and prosaic. But the whole first part of the novel is but a prologue to the second, in which Bakunin's voyage to Italy and the preparation and failure of the Bologna insurrection of 1873 are told. Being himself a Bolognese, Bacchelli is now truly at home and the characters which are already so clean cut in the first part acquire here a deeper relief, as if he had worked at them with love not only for his art, but with love for his native place, both intimate and knowing. The old streets and squares of Bologna, the interminable sunny highroads, the brown and the green fields, the rocky hills of Emilia and Romagna, the markets and the farm-houses; the politicians, the peasants, the women, the workingmen of a narrow and solid and diffident world swept momentarily by a storm of apocalyptic hopes; the sordid, comical, and tragical reality of things, contrasted with the magniloquence of abstract plans; all this makes of the second volume of the Diavolo a thing of life and colour in which poetry is no longer a mere background or accompaniment, but the soul of the story. The style of the first volume is unequal and certain lyrical descriptions of places and skies stand out against the plain, almost grey narrative; they have here adapted themselves, how-

ever, to the variety and succession of human and natural! images, losing nothing of syntactic simplicity. It is a style which conceals a vast literary experience in its short rapid sentences; in its fastidious, though apparently careless, choice of words and constructions which though not deliberately archaic, are yet subtly suggestive of the air and feeling of Italy fifty years ago. Phrases like the following: "*La notte splendeva nell' alto cielo morbido e sereno fra le vecchie grondaie e fra le mura profonde come la pazzienza effimera degli uomini, che le aveva costruite,*" belong to the noblest Latin tradition but are not out of tune with this tale of humble facts. I should love to transcribe in their entirety some episodes of Bolognese life, in which the fusion of the word with the thing is complete, but shall content myself with attempting to translate this description of a typical couple from the underworld, caught at the moment when it makes its appearance on the scene of a semi-tragical riot.

"There looked on these happenings, with an air of condescension, a Bullo, that is a ruffian of the underworld of those times. Showy and well trimmed, he wore an apricot coloured swallow-tail, with trousers fitting tightly at the ankle and swollen in an infinite number of small folds at the hip, of a fashion which twenty years before was called Ypsilanti. He had at his neck a long and high lace tie; his waistcoat was dazzling with colours and with gold trinkets hanging from his pockets. Rings, genuine and false, covered his dirty fingers; he had a flavour of filth and of perfumery. The enormous silk-hat hung somewhat askance, with a knavish gracefulness, on his artificially curled hair. His fingers impressed a quick and careless rotation to a light, thin, Indian cane containing probably a blade capable of cutting a throat or snapping a back if properly handled. With him, and resembling him, in a crinoline sumptuous and out of fashion, covered with frills and finery from her ears and down her corsage to her satin slippers, was she who with her earnings paid for those stylish luxuries. But the chief ambition in the pompous elegance of a Bulla lay in her head-dress: it derived from old fashions abandoned by society; it summarized on that head a whole century in the history of hairdressing. She leaned on the arm of her protector and exploiter: all kinds of curls, of ringlets, of frizzles adorned her head and hung from her temples, on her cheeks, and from the nape of her neck to her shoulders which were fat, wide, and savoury. There was in them a taste of barbarity and of corrupt and degenerate exquisiteness such as belongs to lost races. The Bulla was shapely, still young, with her dark and troubled eyes full of cruel vice and of wearisome wickedness. Worn out and diseased, she was beautiful, of an infamous beauty, as all things are beautiful that have character."

BOOK REVIEWS

THOSE UNKNOWN SINGERS

by Conrad Aiken

The American Songbook. By Carl Sandburg. 8vo.
495 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$7.50.

MR SANDBURG has performed a very useful cultural service in assembling for us, in this hugely diverting volume, a vast array of what might be called American folk-songs and folk-tunes. Almost everything that one can think of is here. If there is a relatively small selection from the negro spirituals, there is, I suppose, sufficient excuse for that in the fact that these are easily obtainable elsewhere, and, on the whole, better known, because more frequently heard. For the rest, Mr Sandburg has erred, if at all, on the side of compendiousness. Some of these songs -- in fact, a good many -- are pretty "small beer"; with little value either as verse or as tune. One would willingly lose fifty or a hundred of them in exchange for the omitted *I've Been Working on the Railroad*, or *Grasshopper Sittin' on a Railroad Track*. But omissions, in a work of this sort, are inevitable. And on the whole one must congratulate Mr Sandburg on his thoroughness: perhaps only finding fault with him for his inclusion of a group of Mexican songs, and a good many English ballads and popular songs (for example, *It's the Syme the Whole World Over*) merely on the ground that they are popular, in America, and frequently sung. The criterion, here, seems to be a little awry. It would as well justify the inclusion of *Annie Laurie* or *Ach du lieber Augustin*. And if mere popularity is to be the criterion, why should one exclude such popular songs as are not anonymous -- for example, the *Sewanee River*? These too, in effect, have become folk-songs; and reflect, as well as anything else, the Zettgeist.

Nevertheless, Mr Sandburg's compendium is extraordinarily entertaining. In a sense, it is a social document of brilliant, and perhaps horrifying, force. Here -- as Mr Sandburg intimates in his preface -- is America. Here are the songs of working-gangs, the songs of hoboes, the songs of jail-birds and dope-fiends, the songs of farmers and cowpunchers and railroad men, the "blues" of negroes. It is an America which Mr Sandburg loves: he makes this sufficiently clear in the somewhat sentimental prefatory notes with which he introduces each item. He dedicates his book, indeed, "To Those Unknown Singers -- Who Made Songs -- Out Of Love, Fun, Grief." These are the folk-songs and folk-tunes of a great democracy; and if one loves democracy, shouldn't one love the songs it sings? . . .

Perhaps one should; but in the face of the present evidence, to do so would tax one's generosity to the breaking-point. As pure

entertainment, there can be no question about the value of this collection. If one is interested in the manners and customs, and the intellectual and emotional level, of the American masses in the period from 1840 to 1920, then one will find plenty of light on that subject in this huge book, and light of a paralysing intensity. Here is indeed a rich folk material, of a sort -- and like all folk material it is racily suggestive of its time and place. But -- may democracy forgive us -- how crude it is! It is folk-poetry -- and folk-song -- at its lowest level. Its humour is coarse farce or burlesque; its pathos is the dreariest and most threadbare of sentimentalities. Its poverty, whether of language or of idea, is almost terrifying. One finds it difficult to conceive how the Anglo-Saxon, with his extraordinary genius for the ballad, and with a ballad tradition which is unparalleled, could descend to such ludicrous fumbblings as these. His gift of phrase, and of succinct emotional utterance, seems here to have abandoned him entirely. One has only to compare this folk literature with that of almost any other civilized nation to feel at once its abysmal spiritual bankruptcy. It is, in fact, a folk literature without genius.

No doubt many excellent reasons could be given for this. One is accustomed to falling back on the time-honoured notion that "there had not yet been time," and that the pioneer life was too hard to permit of any cultural amenities. Whatever the excuse, one must resign oneself to the fact. These songs are delightful, not because of any real excellence as folk art, but simply because they are crude. There are, of course, exceptions to this, notably among the burlesques. The tragic ditties of *Cocaine Lil* and *Willie the Weeper*, and such semi-burlesque pathetic ballads as those that compose the *Frankie and Johnny* cycle, are delicious, as long as one does not ask too much of them. And one can, moreover, discover in many of the cowboy songs or working-gang songs a note of genuine enough feeling: genuine, but not successfully expressed.

Eventually, one comes back to the curious circumstance that only in the negro songs has America produced a folk-literature of any real beauty. In these, one does find a definite genius, both for phrase and melody. The fact that the phrase is frequently nonsense makes no difference: the negro showed an instinctive understanding of the emotional values of his adopted language which his white rivals in the art of balladry have nowhere matched. - And the same thing is true also of the tunes. Only in the negro songs do we find any profundity of feeling. Compared with the average negro spiritual, or even with some of the "blues," the best of these "American" ballads appear superficial, or tawdry, or mawkish, or simply cheap. They can be, and are, occasionally, very funny, with their characteristic laconic exaggerations or droll understatement: but as poetry they are almost nil. The tunes seldom rise above the mediocre, and are usually best when simplest. It is to be regretted that in a good many instances, in this book, these

simple airs have been too elaborately "arranged." What is wanted is a good "running" accompaniment of the plainest sort.

INVESTIGATIONS

The Revolutionary Spirit in France and America. By Bernard Fay. Translated from the French by Ramon Guthrie. 8vo. 613 pages. Harcourt, Brace. \$5.

America and French Culture: 1750-1848. By Howard Mumford Jones. 8vo. 615 pages. The University of North Carolina Press. \$5.

GILBERT SELDES

TO indicate the differences between these two books is not to disparage one or uplift the other, for they are both works of exceptional merit. They differ in scope, in purpose, and in method; but together they form a contribution to a study which remains to be made in completeness -- the study of the sources of the American mentality and psychology. I am aware of the existence of many books indicating our debt to Greece, Italy, Hungary, Samoa, and other places; most of these content themselves with telling us that forty-six per cent of our inventors are of Finno-Ugrian stock and therefore we owe our inventiveness to the Finno-Ugrians. What has been needed is a study in the sources of American habits of mind. I have elsewhere carried on a small and, I hope, not tedious propaganda for a survey of these sources. Not to involve it in current controversy, it may be stated in this way: the people of the United States display characteristics a, b, c, and d. Then the questions to be answered are: Do a, b, c, and d fail to occur in other countries? Are they natural developments in the American environment? Or are they developments of qualities m, n, o, and p which we find in Turkey, France, and Denmark? In the last case, did m develop into a because of specifically American factors (and what are they?) or was m fatally meant to become a in the course of time, is m, in fact, already on its way to becoming a in the country of its origin? When Disraeli accused the European of the nineteenth century of confounding comfort and civilization, he said, specifically, what Europeans always say of the American of the twentieth century. This suggests that the crass materialism of America ought to be analysed. First, does it exist? Second, is it exclusively American? Third, if it can be traced to the post-Napoleonic era in France and to the economists of the Manchester school in England and to the British industrialists of the first half of the last century and to the scientists of all Europe in the second half, what are its specially

American features? And are these American qualities only the foreordained end of European materialism, arrived at a little more rapidly in America, are they showing themselves in Europe, or have they received a special impress from us? The same process ought to be applied to our ideas of liberty, our practice of censorious prohibition, our belief in speed, publicity, size, the sanctity of institutions, the sacredness of the American mission to make the world democratic, and all the other elements in our credo. It might even be applied to the Mencken-Nathan version of the credo where, I know by experiment, the result would be disastrous.

I suggest these researches because the amount of loose talk now being heard about the Americanization of Europe is a menace -- possibly not a direct menace to peace between us and Europe, but certainly a peril to those friendly intellectual relations which civilized Americans always count on. It is quite possible that it is our destiny to ruin Europe and in that case investigation will reveal to Europe precisely the elements in the American character which they have most to fear; and it is also possible that it is our mission to regenerate Europe, and here again knowing what is American will help us. There is an alternative. Perhaps America ought to become infinitely less dependent upon Europe than it has ever been, to create its own standards, its own philosophical habits, its own arts. In that case we ought to be alarmed over the centuries during which America has been Europeanized and ought to cast out these alien elements. The knowledge we shall gain from our researches can be put to many uses. The one I think of is rather abstract. We shall simply know what America is and what Europe is.

The Franco-American relation at the time of the two Revolutions is a perfect subject. Dramatically we have Lafayette and Rochambeau aiding the rebel arms on this side, and Franklin at Court, Thomas Paine elected to the Convention on the other. M Fay's work is a study in inter-relations, in the development of that body of doctrine which held the emotions of Europe for half a century. The two countries dazzled one another; M Fay is dealing with a love-affair of the first rank, an affair which resulted in a liaison and ended in a rupture with disappointment on both sides. It is an amazing connexion with a Quaker as the middle term between Voltaire and Robespierre and an Indian as the link between Rousseau and Chateaubriand. Mr Jones who began with the idea of studying the reception of French literature in America during the Romantic Period was compelled to make the vast preliminary study he has now published because the connexions are so intricate and minute; M Fay, studying moral and intellectual relations, is compelled to call in literature, elopements, and political scandals.

These books might serve also as a guide to internationalism of a sort which neither statesmen nor patriots need fear. The idea of the rights of man and the idea of democracy against royal prerogative

tive, were concentrated in France -- the sources were in many lands; so it was France which stimulated the American colonists to the first political expression of these ideas. Yet America turned against the French Revolution in time and what M Fay calls "the great schism" followed the spiritual unity of the two countries. To the austere conservatives of the 1800's, France was a menace and Jefferson, the upholder of French notions, a traitor; yet America was not swept away -- it held to its own philosophy even after the French Revolution had carried that philosophy to an entirely French conclusion. And, to take a parallel case from Mr Jones: ". . . when Jefferson brought back from Paris a fastidious taste for French wines and cookery, Patrick Henry denounced him on the stump as a recreant to roast beef -- one who 'abjured his native victuals'." But the American cuisine never became wholly French and a taste for French wines remains the symbol of an entirely proper internationalism, one which is willing to allow the superiority of other countries in certain respects and wishes each country to develop its best qualities without hindrance. The internationalism which civilized people fear is that of the wagons-lits. The great expresses run from Calais to Constantinople and in the dreadful day to come the food will be identical on every day of the trip, identically bad.

I fear that I have given a wrong impression of the two books I am reviewing -- since I have said little of their actual content and manner. They are, in themselves, significant works; they have scholarship, construction, vividness; their special subjects are of the highest importance. But I cannot help feeling that the questions they suggest are even more important. I think of them both as pioneer work in an analysis of America.

GETHSEMANE

The Letters of Vincent Van Gogh to His Brother. With a Memoir by his Sister-in-law,
J. van Gogh-Bonger. Illustrated. Two volumes.
Svo. 554 and 646 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$175.

THERE are certain agonies that are too much for human nature. The soul rebels. It is impossible to pile pain upon pain -- at a certain point the victim loses consciousness -- and even a Lord High Inquisitor desists. In art these excesses of tribulation seem unaesthetic just for that reason -- that they are not

measured to the human standard. I shed tears, years ago, at the reading of James Stephens' extraordinary little study of starvation in the Dublin tenements' but they were not, I confess, so much tears of sympathy with the tragedy depicted as anger at the author for daring to reveal such a flaw in the thing we call life. One such horror seems to deny God. I recall very well leaning back in my chair for a quarter of an hour going through a process of deliberately stamping the story off my brain before daring to rise again to confront the world.

Just such a feeling of repulsion came over me when reading the Van Gogh letters. One of them in particular was so heart-breaking I had to put the book aside for a while, postponing the little summary I intended making of them.

The main facts of the miserable life I already knew. I had seen the paintings and knew them to be great. I had read a number of biographic and other essays, some of them for and some of them against the artist. Those that were "against," enlarged upon the insanities, upon the sordid background to the life, and finally upon the shocking episode at the very end, when the wretched Vincent, in an aberration, sliced off one of his own ears and sent it to the Magdalen of the village where he lived. These things proved the art to be bad, it was held. In reality, and as usual, it was the new way of presenting truth that shocked these critics. Intense sincerity in any art is sure to scandalize the small-minded but it is seldom that the Philistines alight so quickly as they did in this case upon biographic data so calculated to confirm them in their notion that Van Gogh was a bad man and therefore a bad painter. For that matter, the sensational items that were noised abroad were disconcerting enough in all conscience to those who admired the pictures; but they who judged them with their eyes and shut their ears to gossip, triumphed in the end over the rabble. Vincent van Gogh was a great painter and it now appears he was extraordinarily good as well. Even the late Count Tolstoy could accept this art on his own terms of "morality first" and painting afterward. Not that I am a Tolstoyan. On the contrary, I find it easier to judge morals by aesthetics than to judge aesthetics by morals.

Vincent, apparently, was doomed from the beginning. These two volumes of letters to the beloved brother Theodore are vividly revealing, and in the earliest accents there is something troubling to the sympathetic reader who already knows he is peeping into the secrets of a genius. Vincent was too simple, too honest, too undeviatingly attached to his own inner guide, to cope with a world that is built upon compromise. Born into a poor clergyman's family, and breathing naturally in the pious atmosphere of his simple home, he at first thought to be a clergyman himself. Difficulties at once announced themselves. Vincent had practically nothing but what little he had he straightway gave to the poor.

He had an overwhelming pity for the poverty-stricken miners and wished to consecrate himself to aiding them. His spiritual advisers were horrified by such wholesale Christianity. "A person who neglects himself so," they found, "could not be an example to other people." Rejected by the clergy, there followed a long period of distress, during which, and vaguely at first, his true vocation made itself felt. With ten francs in his pocket he undertook an expedition to Courrières, the dwelling-place of Jules Breton, whose pictures and poems he admired, and whom he secretly hoped to meet, in some fashion. But the newly built studio of Breton looked inhospitable and he lacked the courage to enter. Discouraged, he set out upon the long journey home. His money being spent, he slept in the open air or in hay-lofts. At times he managed to exchange a drawing for a piece of bread but there was so much fatigue and hardship that his health ever afterward suffered. Once definitely committed to being an artist, however, his mental serenity returned and never again did he doubt his calling. "Everything changed for him," he wrote, but that it was still the old Vincent, deeply concerned with suffering humanity, is apparent in another line: 'And in a picture I wish to say something that would console as music does.'

But by this time the torments were loosed in earnest. : No one believed in him comprehendingly, save the brother Theodore to whom: the letters went; and he had extraordinary need for comprehension and love. On the contrary everybody interfered with him. All were sceptical as to his talent, and indeed the little drawings that accompany the letters are not the sort that bowl people over. They are awkward and uncouth, like Vincent, and the best that may be said of them is that they are earnest. In particular, there was a man named Tersteeg, an art dealer, who lost all patience with him, rebelled at the weekly drain on poor Theodore for fifty or one hundred francs, and finally poisoned Anton Mauve -- the one artist that Vincent had impressed -- with distrust. This man Tersteeg was doubtless an honest enough individual but to Vincent he seemed a demon. The horrid part of the affair is the realization now that nine out of ten ordinarily intelligent people would act precisely as he did in similar circumstances. The climax arrived when Vincent, living in a hut, upon a pittance supplied by his brother, took up with a young woman of low character who had been acting as his model, and gave her domicile. This supplied the finishing touch for Tersteeg and Mauve. The letters in defence of his action, by the unfortunate artist, are among the most moving in the annals of art. The young woman, it seemed, had been abandoned, pregnant, to gain her living on the streets as best she could. She was as miserable as Vincent and he saw no inequality where Christ would have seen none.

When he asked Mauve to come look at his drawings, the latter said: "I will certainly not come to see you. All that is over," and

then added, "You have a vicious character." ... "I turned around and went back alone, but with a heavy heart because Mauve had dared to say that to me. I shall not ask him to explain it, neither shall I excuse myself. And still -- and still -- and still -- I wish Mauve were sorry for it."

It was at that point I laid aside the letters for a while.

¹ As originally published, *Hunger* by James Esse; now reprinted as one of the stories by James Stephens, which comprise the volume, *Etched in Moonlight*, 12mo, 199 pages, The Macmillan Company, \$2.50.

BRIEFER MENTION

Overland, by Dorothy Richardson (12mo, 240 pages; Knopf: \$2.50). In this, the tenth volume of Miriam Henderson's *Pilgrimage*, we accompany her to a hotel in Switzerland and are there participant with her in a thousand sensitive insights. Miss Richardson is Victorian in sentiment and errs frequently in style, but where else do we find so dedicated a reverence for the implications of each passing moment, so scrupulous an attention to every tap of experience sounding outside an ear always attuned for such messages?

The Great Detective Stories, A Chronological Anthology, compiled and edited with an introduction by Willard Huntington Wright (12mo, 483 pages; Scribner's: \$2.50) has an exceptionally fine introduction, which includes a running history of the development of detective fiction (stories and novels -- the editor holds that detective novels are not fiction, strictly, but riddles in fictional form) and an analysis of the elements in the type. About half of the stories are disappointing; they are not detective, but mystery fiction -- in which detectives do not detect, but are passive while secret passages are revealed to them or other accidents betray a crime. Among the devices which, according to Mr Wright, are "no longer used except by the inept or uninformed author" he lists "the phonograph alibi" and mentions two notable writers who have used it. Neither of these writers, by a coincidence, is S. S. Van Dine, the author of the Philo Vance stories, who uses the device and, Mr Wright ought to know, is neither inept nor uninformed -- or at least is not uninformed.

Min-Yo: Folk-Songs of Japan, selected, translated, and with introduction by Iwao Matsuhara (illus., 16mo, 227 pages; Shin-Sei Do, Tokyo: price not given). These songs -- with introductory classification and a word as to composition -- are presented in three versions; English, Japanese, and an English phonetic equivalent. Certain songs are, as English rhyme, not

quite satisfactory, but the collection as a whole leads one to reflect that compression, mastery of the single tone, of the muted tone, of silence, are cardinal accomplishments.

My Life, by Isadora Duncan (8vo, 359 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$5).

Though confession may be good for the soul, it is difficult for one who has lived for many years on the front page of newspapers. The awareness that she was always "good copy" guided the pen of the autobiographer, displacing sincerity with artfulness. Episodes which may have been beautiful in reality are rendered tawdry in the telling; instead of the figure of a great artist there emerges the effigy of an Elinor Glyn heroine. The impulsiveness and the restless energy which made Isadora Duncan a world-renowned artist are reflected in these chapters, but something finer and more fundamental remains unexplained.

Disraeli: A Picture of the Victorian Age, by André Maurois, translated from the French by Hamish Miles (8vo, 379 pages; Appleton: \$3).

Adjustingly and as he feels justly M Maurois has set his garland above "this sad and clever face ;" if it is not a saint's halo, and M Maurois says not, it is a species of crown. We are glad to have been acquainted before with those not congenial to M Maurois's temperament -- Gladstone, Sir Robert Petl, and the Earl of Derby -- but we rejoice that our old favourite, who was possessed not only of charm but of greatness, should be fortunate in his biographer. The entertainingly and perfectly fused excellences of the *Life* are indelible. "Wizardry and power," "gratitude," the "symbol of what can be accomplished, in a cold and hostile universe, by a long youthfulness of heart" -- these are Disraeli.

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

by Kenneth Burke

THERE is cause to regret, in hearing the *Oedipus Rex*, that one has during the course of the year branded any other work as possessing more than passing interest. For unless some fresh and greater glow can be contrived which does not too much endanger the style, any previous enthusiasms must be felt to invalidate the present one. The sole possible procedure is lame, but necessary: first to insist that the earlier praises arose, to some extent, *faute de mieux*; to abjure, to become a new man. And next to admit one's discomfiture at lauding Strawinsky anyhow. On this second point we have the precedent of the voice of God itself -- the audience. For they too, despite their obvious affection, applauded but little and sporadically, doubtless feeling the inadequacy of duck-talk to express gratitude for this solemn and

corrosive work.



Stravinsky

Igor Stravinsky's Opera-Oratorio, *Oedipus Rex*. The performance of this by the Boston Symphony in New York.

There is a mode of torment, most often accredited to China, whereby the victim is kept from relapsing into sleep by an incessant goading. Presumably, by even the subtlest and most economical of movements, one could come to induce in his man a state of fiendish exasperation, until the slightest tickle might cause him to thrash about, like some happily captured fish thrown upon the sand. The Stravinsky method of appeal was somewhat similar. The obsessive element of the music was continuous, maintained by an extreme shrewdness and parsimony in both repetition and variation. The power was not derived from the multiplication of the voices, nor from the bulk of the instruments; it was a thing of texture and form. The rhythmic effects were subtilized beyond perception -- the great orchestral hiccoughs of the *Sacre* were gone, rhythmic changes residing not in the upheaval of the total mass, but in internal adjustments and timings. It is the brasses that are pugnacious and rousing; it is the woodwinds that are odd and unnerving -- and to these latter instruments (where the fortissimo is almost an impossibility) the burden of the attack seems to have fallen.

Surely we may observe in this work the first clear crystallization of what will be, if any, the new art. We feel this to such an extent that we should wish to hail the music as a standard even had we found it disappointing as sound, a position which we are emphatically spared. Here the production of art is made difficult, and no other kind of art, in our present weedy plenty, has a justification for existence. People presumably still search for some mechanism -- Freudian, gymnastic, or anaesthetic -- to loosen their utterance, forgetful of how many, how ghastly many, have found

such. How can one, without humility that takes the breath away, still dare to peddle some tiny corner of sensibility, after an accumulation which the prowess of a Saintsbury and the years of a Jewish patriarch could not encompass? Who has found a metaphor, a new toot, tha "in proudly go and sit with all the other metaphors, the other toots?

A work such as this, written with a sense of stricter obligation, makes even the composer's own past seem irresponsible. It possibly clears away a considerable area of the artist's development, leaves him with new blank walls to stare at. It does provide its own intolerance. Here, the very readiness of colour, the range of possible sounds, have brought with them the duty of distrusting all such ubiquitous opportunity. We seemed to feel some element of the hushed, the thwarted -- if we may mean by this not the difficulties of weakness or distress, but the prerogatives of superior understanding. For that sense of the impending, of overhanging fate which pervades the music -- was it indeed the future of Aeschylus, or was it the constant admonition which the author had imposed upon his own methods?

The libretto (what we saw of it was the English translation of the Latin version of Cocteau's French original) was a mixture of extreme sophistication and -- in keeping -- mock clumsiness. It would be hard, for instance, to decide under which category we should place the blunt résumé of the plot as explained by the Speaker; or the indeterminate fluctuation in attitude whereby the story is sometimes told as a mere summarizing of another man's text and at other times advances in its own right. In its woodenness, it contains sufficient drama: Oedipus remains boastful at solving the riddle of the Sphinx, while the successive disclosures which are to entail his destruction accumulate about him. Thus, the mood of apprehension is built not upon surprise, but upon foreknowledge; and as is natural to this procedure, a certain amount of dramatic irony is called into service.

In other matters, the satisfactions of the month were mostly of the retrospective variety. We think primarily of Toscanini, and -- with Toscanini -- of his conducting of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony. In this work, where loveliness is so husbanded, and hammered, and dwelt upon as to become magnificent, Toscanini discloses a wealth of effects which it would be disquieting to hear happen and vanish so quickly did we not have the naive assurance that the same sequence could be repeated...Maurice Ravel, conducting the New York Symphony in an all-Ravel programme, did little to champion the qualities of his own music. The Valse, which we had liked extremely under Mengelberg, was clearly tamed, leading us to wonder whether the composer might profit by a certain affirmativeness in his readings which is not present in his writings...With the Philadelphia Orchestra, under Pierre

Monteux, we heard Gabriel Pierné's *Music Hall Impressions*. Despite a certain night-light joyousness, with some "catchy" motives, the instrumental clownings of this piece, which had its première as far back as 1927, seemed quite obsolete...And, imperfectly returning, we should include in such an enumeration the exalted playing of the fifth Handel *Concerto Grosso, for String Orchestra*, with which Koussevitsky had preceded his performance of the *Oedipus*.

=====

JUNE

MANORBIER

(To Mr and Mrs Arthur Machen)

BY ROBERT HILLYER

It is green with ivy

But the stones are criss-crossed

With cracks and crannies,
Tooth-marks of the frost;
The roofless tower,

The sundered wall,

The gaping lancet,
Frost gnaws them all.
Time in transit
Measured by years

Has emptied the hall,
Rusted the spears.

The long rains fall
Where the marriage bed
Saw the virgin a wife
And the mother dead,
Saw the birth of the son
And the warrior head
White on the pillow

Stained with red.

Now it is summer
The swans float

Each with its double
On the scummy moat.
If you hear the fiddler

MANORBIER
Playing his fiddle

It's the wind in the crannies
With dust in its throat.

If you hear the drummer
Tapping his drum

It's a dead branch hanging
Swinging and banging,
Summoning no one,

There is no one to come.

I was born in a chamber

Under the eaves;

The room I remember

And the sound of leaves

And the sound of ocean

And ships come home

When we ran with our welcome
Knee-deep through foam.

In the garden by moonlight
Each leaf on the rose-bush

A silver flake,

A ghost of a flame!

Hearing voices, the loveless one
Fired by their passion

Fled down to the lake

Where a tall lady came.

**To-morrow at sunset,"
She said to her lover,
"Look up to my window
And I will be there."
She glimmered away,
And faint like a halo
The moon on her hair.

Most beautiful lady,
How slowly the snail

Through the grey dust lengthens
His rainbow trail.

On the steps of the sunset

Did I find you -- or not?

How should you remember
When your lover forgot?

Is there nobody now

Who can speak with my speech
But the wind in the ruin,
The waves on the beach?
There are hundreds of cities
Out there beyond reach,
Three thousand miles over
The sea whence I came.

I built them myself,

I left this to the weather
And forgot my own name.

I will go up the stairway
That ends in the air,

I will stand in the chapel
And offer a prayer

To saints who for ages
Have not been there.

I will lean out of windows
That have no top

And look far below me

A dizzy drop

To the moat and the cliff
And beyond to the beach
And beyond to the ocean
Where the eyes stop.

Why did I leave

this house like a Viking?
Why did I leave it

for frosts to crack?

Did the stairway lead me
then to disaster?
Did a door ajar
show the flame and the rack?
I have forgotten the cause of my going,
And even the cause of my coming back.

Some things with me
are the never-dying,
All of us curséd
with time's effacement;
The ivy-vine grown
so black has forgotten
The beginning tendril
that clung to the basement;
The gap in the wall has forgotten the window,
And I, the face that looked down from the casement.

Now is the season when the whole world over
The herds are munching the ripe clover;

The green baby-hair of the crops to come
Is ruffled by the wind; the may-flies hum
In the air, and the bees intermittently humming
Dive to one flower and drone to a sweeter;
This is the mating-song season, at evening
When the lover listens his love will be coming.

But summer like winter
Conspiring slowly
To throw down the mighty
And exalt the lowly
Is gnawing at walls
All but time held holy.
By tendrils of ivy
The stones are split;
Trees shoulder the ingles
Where earls would sit,
And the ants drag the mortar
Away, bit by bit.

Who is my brother?

Who is my friend?

The song does not falter
Though the singer end.

But I, the last singer,
Forgetting my song

One summer morning

A thousand years long,
Have gone up the stairway
That ends in the air,
Surprising dead saints
With the ghost of a prayer,

And looked out of windows
That have no top,

To the beach, to the ocean,
Where the eyes stop.

But the mind will not stop.
The heart will not stop.

FIVE PROSE SKETCHES

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

Note: These five sketches will be included in a novel entitled A Voyage to Pagany to be published shortly by The Macaulay Company.

THE VOYAGE

THE ship was rolling heavily with a steady list to starboard from the force of the wind which carried her lower to the side on which his cabin lay. Down, down she went without a great amount of pitching but down, down, down till the trunk near the door squeaked in its lashings and all the loose objects in the cabin shuttled and slid about the floor. Then with a slight shudder the ship rose slowly leaning again for a brief moment to windward -- and with this motion and joy in his heart, he slept like an angel. His parents had come from the other side to America in ships. His uncle had died in a ship and been buried from one. To him the sea was the grave of all his cares, the one power hopelessly subtle and uncontrolled, unbridged, unbeaten --

"I am beginning to think we should have no mercy for any one -- unless we love him. Get all you can out of the other fellow before he takes it out of you." Curious bits of conversation. "J'étais un homme très vulgaire -- j'étais un voleur" -- 'the twist of the years' -- "'Truth and Beauty married and the child was love.'" "Deux cognacs, Sil vous plait. Je suis poli, moi." French once mote! His ear drank it in with avidity. Benedictine 10c. Fine 10c. That's something!

Then the wet and cold of the storm passed but the great waves continued, causing the ship from time to time to give three or four lurches deeper than the rest. The sky was blue overhead, the decks sanded. Evans stood by the weather rail watching the sea-gulls flying near the ship's side, especially one, a beautifully marked Mackerel gull, larger than the rest, which with motionless wings was gliding, keeping pace with the ship not ten feet from his hand

resting on the rail. He watched its eye watching him -- and its head shifting slightly from time to time. :

There was a hailstorm that afternoon. The wind was now due north, the weather cold and squally.

Then swiftly, the sea, limitless, filling the imagination roundly on all sides, supporting, buoyant, satisfying -- was damaged. Forward, as if the work of birds flying out from beyond the horizon, the thought of land! land! The seahold upon the imaginations of the company had been broken.

England was there, little as a boat. One felt all England, all one had ever heard or felt of England, from old Mother Cobb to the last pantings of discomfort in the daily press. There it was, pathetic, an island in the sea, powerless and naive as the small strength of a lion, or the boom of a big cannon. From the sea one could come to hold it as a god might hold an infant on his arm, for a moment. Later, the twin lights of the Scilly Islands gave an inkling, the only inkling, of the world beyond them, silent under the night sky.

CARCASSONNE

Carcassonne, a rock ruined by tears. It had to be rock-rimmed to give it credence, rock-chapeled. It tapped the rock and the sweet water flew out -- a hidden gentleness which had no certain name, in them without excuse -- but like rain on armour. A brief advantage for which they panted. Water! Christ. Water all within themselves. Themselves. Their defences broken, out it comes. Tears. Which have now melted the rock which conserved it and caused it to run and disappear in the sand.

Forfeitures, murders, replacements -- a passionate fountain -- whose passion, coloured with the ground, was ready to be coloured from the air also, giving steel to that, and getting -- air, sometimes full of light, and again full of mist and cloudiness --

The chapel was cold. On the uneven floor they walked about whispering. Very old it seemed but full of a strange assurance, because possibly, they were young and felt no part in it.

The garden was better, though best was to stand in the southwest wind that tore at their garments as they went to the ramparts and looked out toward the snow mountains across the valley to the southwest, mounting the archers' galleries, peering through the slits of the meurtrières.

Do you remember anything of the history --

Not a word, never heard of it --

They looked long and silently, muffled from the past, at the far Pyrenees, hiding themselves from the invincible wind. They leaped down long steps from the ramparts --

Boso and Irmingard, brothers of Richard le Justicier.

The Arabs. Pippin the Short.

It can't have been an important place; I should have come across it in my mediaeval history --

Hand in hand the two ran in the /ice between the outer and inner fortifications and found tiny daisies pressed close to the ground, as earliest flowers always are, for warmth.

They saw much of the place but their minds became stiffened and their faces, too, with the force of the wind and the cold. They hid in sunny nooks of the walls but sunless corners were desolate and they fled at last, up through a postern, out again oppressed by the stones and the death of the place -- the cold -- hating the obstinacy of the defences -- too strong -- senseless.

THE ARNO

By dawn they were at Pisa. The train was still, in a freight-yard. The stars were not yet gone. There was a moon in what Evans thought must be the west. He got up and looked about as the train began to move again softly, slowly in the grey light, thinking he might see the famous tower. Nothing. They left Pisa behind. So much for Pisa. Again he slept.

Once more he woke. The sun was up.

Leaning into the window he saw the world of form once more. He saw vineyards, trees in rows to which wires were fastened supporting grape-vines newly pruned, long reddish tendrils awaiting the sun of summer to grow new shoots and grapes. Peasants were coming into the fields. There were magpies, a bird he knew, in the young trees, magpies and crows in the furrows. Now grain and garden truck and orchards, pruned and ready. Fields of mustard in flower there were and cows and goats, by the light of the early blinding sun. Italy! He did not think of an ancient splendour but of morning and fields and vines.

Steadily the train took him into his delight.

The train which understands but a very few words and in the modern dialect only, was approaching that ancient Tuscan city of Florence but without being impressed. Evans, however, was impressed and began to decorate his spirit with fitting clothes -- saying, They speak of these cities as if they were dusty or dead; or with scholarly, abated voices --

The train was running beside a narrow winding rivulet. It @as the Arno, flooding its banks, from whose liquorous bounty an army of sunbeams were drinking so that the air was luminous with mist and the grass and herbage everywhere were dripping. It was the Arno preparing to bring all its country charm to pass under the old bridge.

It was the Arno, before Florence, gathering tribute from the fields -- a workaday river -- countryman, maker, poet -- poetic river. River, make new, always new -- using rain, subterranean springs to make a great bounty.

Florence, city of makers --

Sooner or later, they call us in, to make up choir benches out of oak-trees, make lace out of daisies, the circles out of roses, the white out of our despair -- white as despair -- totally colourless --

River, you make "the Arno" every day fresher than the greatest artists can make painted flowers: they may come to you every day for a lesson remembering only the sea that is greater.

Flow. Flow under the old bridge forever new and say to it that only that which is made out of nothing at all is forever new. Make new, make new.

And all the time he was watching the sun clearing the mists over the wild Arno and seeing it up to the top of its banks as if with ready fingers seeking to feel in among the grass. I know that feeling, he said, to be full of pleasure.

Flow new under the old bridge...

And all the time he was going to Florence, Dante's city, city of the old bridge, city of "the David," of Raphael -- he wanted to say Giotto -- instead he called it: City of the Arno, and the Arno before there was a city, teaching from the fields of Proserpine, the fields of the Vernal gods. Botticelli, Donatello -- now it was nearer. But he did not care for history. He knew only a river flowing through March in the sun, making, making, inviting the recreators -- asking to be recreated.

It is the river god singing, that I hear, singing in the morning, asking if all making is ended. What to do?

He saw peasants leading animals, in the cold. Clickety click, clickety clack. People going into Florence began to get into his compartment. Be there by 8:30. They bowed to him, for the most part, with a momentary glance at his strangeness -- perhaps ; a foreigner. Then they looked out of the window or talked, or read a paper.

NAPLES

Naples did not interest him. The second day he was there, he took the funicolare up the hill back of the city for a view of the bay. All he wanted of Naples was -- the bay.

He paused before the frescoes from Pompeii, fauns, satyrs -- indifferent work, some of it. But the archaic Athena -- the fluted gown stretched taut between her knees as she strode smiling forward, the spear lifted to strike. Before such understanding, he looked shamefacedly at the ground...Then Cava.

The son of the hotel proprietor went with him for a walk to show him about the place before supper. Softly the quiet evening entered Evans' disturbed mind. The young chap was hoarse from yelling at a soccer game that afternoon when Cava had beaten Torre del Greco, 2 to 1.

They started to walk back of the little hotel where there was a heap of willow withes lying ready for the vine-tying. They walked on down a narrow path between small fields where women were dropping potato cuttings in rows fresh opened by men with mattocks going before them. They jumped a ditch with violets growing on its sides and came to the bed of a stream with a small sand-bar in it and so on for an hour.

Evans peered into the doors of peasant cottages as they passed. Churns, tubs, and the like lay about the back doors. The houses seemed wide open but deserted. It was growing late when they returned to the hotel for supper. The place was small, cold, and with but two or three guests in it. A solitary English woman of forty or more was sitting reading in the old-fashioned reading-room of the place, unmindful of the cold.

That night in his sweetly musty bedroom, the window wide open, Evans could hear the silence of the cold night as he lay quietly staring up at the dark ceiling, faintly lit nevertheless by a light from somewhere -- from the night itself it seemed. Death it seemed

to him might be sweetly like this, lying there for ever.

THE TYROL

...As if coming from a shell he saw the cold, jagged, withered mountains cut out on the blue sky, snowcapped and with wind making a play of the snow on the high glissades. The train hugged the valleys.

He saw slanting ledges where his mind walked at ease aloof from the crawling world; V-shaped gorges he saw and inverted fans of fallen rock and sand by the cliff's face. Into his spirit he drew, along with his breaths, the stillness and the cold which his body could not have reached. Or he saw a great knob of even granite, shaped like a rock to hold smoothly in the hand and to stroke. Rocks precipitous, perpendicular, measured only by a few thousand feet but straight up, to man most difficult. Now he saw the pine, the evergreen woods, starting up the slopes and stopping, or from the recent rains, finger-like spouts of water fell from the tops of the visible mountain walls, showing cliffs higher, and melting snow. The sun is growing warmer. Or on flat rocks, black stains of running water spread out lacquerlike on the rock's face. To the north with the sun on them were great pinnacles, sparkling, snapping, cut out with its sharp knife on the lakes of hard blue. The minute features of the rock drew Dev from point to point, the particular conformation of some slowly turning pinnacle. Eagerly he watched it turn, revealing its person. So arose the personalities of the Gods, aloof, particular, visible, deathlike, near but far, nothing between us and them but air, space -- frozen...

So he sat for an hour, two hours, his face pressed upon the window-pane absorbed in the mountains, while the train laboured, and wound and stopped and started again at the little hamlet stations. To the south side of the car he shifted and saw a more gradual rise across pastures, green and flowery. But to the north a stream ran by the railway, tributary to the Rhine. Its head-waters; I don't know. Rhine and Danube, head-waters hereabouts, about the same parentage. One goes to Budapest; the other to Holland. Parting of the ways.

He went back to the mountains, once more rock-ledges where no snow clings, a great snow field, then up, up to the forbidding summit, snapping sunlight painting it orange, purple, black -- A hawk there, a hawk!

In the bark crevices of the trees, Evans could see ants running, their slight antennae working nervously in and out -- running perpendicularly --

Fish, trout -- chamois too and ibex must be up there. On the railroad folder there was a scene, an Alpine hunter with an ibex over the nape of his neck. In the centre of culture there is a wild park -- Switzerland --

He could see and he knew the details of the flowers, from within the train, the minute perfection of spot and fibril, the cold details of the mountains; though he could see but the gross contours -- +yet the details came to him. Far off he recognized the aching sense of a woman, far off, a woman whom he had known, outside, far outside, going, not inside anywhere any more. A memory. Memory is the affirmation of genius; a fast-fading memory. Once he thought he saw her in the car, a pair of green satin slippers, and back he came with a start. Out of memory. She is in this train! Who? Should I know her if I saw her now? He tried to remember her features and remembering he had been trying, he found himself looking at the ridge of a frostdistant peak -- having forgotten what he was trying to recall...

To forget the pain, we lose memory itself until there is nothing more. Nothing should be forgotten, yet we must forget. The hooks of memory are worn smooth with the weight of pain that has slipped from them. I remember nothing. I see and it is forgotten. Only that is brilliant which is there, there. Everything else, good and bad, is slipping away, taught by the anguish. But that which is there -- it is without memory and without pain. My life is an effort to avoid memory; an escape. Fasten I will upon the thing, there outside the window, that lives without pain and without memory.

All day they were in the train, going. It took a solidity away from them all, train goes. They became fluid from the excess of their passage and flowed together -- the lines between them as individuals melting only to be redefined later.

Those that got out at noon were not in the same cast with those going on. The panorama of the day. More than half Switzerland, east to west, they saw. .

All day, since five in the morning, the struggling and rolling train had moved with the sun through valley after valley, in mountainous passes until the mountains had seemed to enter the train possessing it so that it became a mountain train, a thing belonging to the rocks and snows -- All, nearly all day, the window pelted with these sights, he felt almost a mountaineer; he grew used to the melting winter of the Alps and the implication: Thus the world is and I am part of it.

THE MEN

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

Wherein is Moscow's dignity
more than Passaic's dignity?

A few men have added colour better
to the canvas, that's all.

The river is the same
the bridge is the same

there is the same to be discovered
of the sun --

Look how cold, steelgrey
runs the water of the Passaic.
The Church-of-the-Polacks'
russian towers, bulbous

kiss the sky just so sternly
dreamily, futilely

as in Warsaw -- as in Moscow.
Violet smoke rises

from the factory chimneys -- only
the men are different who see it
draw it down in their minds --
or might be different.

MAXIM GORKI

1868-1928

[Editorial note: Gorki died later than *that*,
which is the year Italy's Facisti sent him back to Russia.
MPDMedia]

BY ALEXANDER KAUN

OF a July afternoon you are likely to discover Maxim Gorki on the edge of a precipitous bluff above the gulf of Capo di Sorrento. From the ducal villa you wind between hot cluster-laden vines till you emerge suddenly on a clearing some twenty feet from Lamartine's favourite ilex, and catch sight of a gaunt figure doubled against the shimmering blue of sky and water. You are greeted by a curve of smoke, by a long hand with a cigarette sweeping toward you -- then pointingly, to the ground. You follow the silent invitation and seat yourself on the rocky earth next to Kuzka, the terrier, who acknowledges your discretion by a quiver of the tail. Directly ahead, on the opposite shore looms Vesuvius, his plume limp in the windless heat; to the left you discern an amethyst mass -- Capri. ... The long hand, the impertinently aggressive nose and sad grey eyes of Gorki look straight down, perpendicularly. Midway of the almost sheer cliff, on a narrow ledge several hundred feet above the sea, you observe two specks -- rock-hewers. Clinging to the wall for hours, these nimble southerners peck and hammer, now and then producing a deafening crash as they manage to hurl down a goodly rock. At the reverberation Gorki's nose turns toward you, screws up on one side, twisting the whole face into the grimace of a sly muzhik.

Kuzka rises, stretches himself, and starts toward the villa. His master breaks the silence: tea-time. They are waiting for us at the table. We walk back single file, Kuzka leading -- Gorki striding widely, with the slight stoop of a tall man, half turning his mobile nose to accentuate the resounding bass of his words. His discourse -- and it is to go on for hours -- is rhapsodic. After praising the dexterity and courage of the stone-hewers, he passes to his favourite theme, human labour -- magnificent factor in the creation of a better world. Full of scintillating generalities, his speech exchanges its directness and coarseness for a garb of refinement, of bookishness, acquiring an ex cathedra tone. But not for long. He recalls his own experiences as a labourer. Now he is in his element! Among convexly vivid shapes of stevedores and bakers, scullions and cobblers, apple-vendors and cider-pedlars, bird-catchers and night-watchmen, errand-boys and knight-errants of the road -- men and ex-men, in whose midst he spent his childhood and youth. Having emerged from the "lower depths" to fame and culture, Gorki recalls his past neither with vindictiveness nor with sentimentality. In a language robust and precise; with mobile emphasis, by nose, forehead, eyebrows, and mustachios, he hews out figure after figure, scene after scene, in strokes as telling and dexterous as those of the nimble Italians suspended over the waters of Capo di Sorrento. One listens enraptured. The visiting prima donna seizes his hand and presses it to her lips.

It is characteristic of him that he should shift his vision from remote beauty and grandeur to the perpendicular and the near. "I am a man of the earth," is his refrain, in conversation and letter.

For him the pivot of the universe is man. With consistency, despite disheartening experiences, he has for thirty-five years sung a hymn to Man. "All for Man. All through Man." It is a voice de profundis, but no plaintive wail, no plea for pity; it sounds contempt for weakness, it rises as a challenge to man to conquer life and cleanse it from its pettiness.

There may have been moments when in singing that hymn his voice sounded shrill and unsure, for as soon as he departs from the soil and what is tangible, he flounders. When he speaks of the rock-hewers and stevedores, when he writes of his grandmother and of Tolstoy, of conflagrations and drunken orgies, of men and phenomena that he has observed and absorbed, he has few equals. When he generalizes or invents, he is highfaluting and ineffective; he gropes.

He is aware of his limitations; he admits that by contrast with Andreyev's extraordinary power of imagination and intuition he resembles a dray-horse beside an Arabian steed. The first volume of *The Life of Klim Samgin*, the ambitious novel which he is writing at present, deals chiefly with the Intelligentsia of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The unacclimated Gorki has treated this nondescript, apparently comprehensive yet subtly exclusive body either with resentment or with reverence, as one who does not "belong." It in turn regarded him at first as a freakish curiosity; then later, with the growth of his power and influence, as an upstart. To the intellectual aristocracy of the Merezhkovsky-Hippius circle, he has been "a negro in a silk hat." We may anticipate a multitude of powerful portraits and scenes, however, in the subsequent parts of this novel when the author proceeds to work in his native element.

As journalist, editor, and too obliging granter of interviews, Gorki has possibly erred not a few times against tact and prudence. His political statements, pronounced with Wilsonian solemnity of the "May I not" variety, have frequently provoked a furore akin to scandal, necessitating further statements and explanations, which as a rule have failed to mend matters. He is prone to contradict himself awkwardly, to change his stand in a brief space of time, and to wish he might unsay the things he has said.

An explanation may be found in the condition of Russia itself. In the absence of parliamentary institutions, of a free press, of free organization and assembly, the Russian public however hampered by censorship, has found in literature during the last hundred years, its national utterance. As spokesman for the inarticulate millions, the writer has been expected to give voice to their pent-up aspirations, hopes, sorrows, doubts; to be an artist and also, perhaps primarily, a preacher. Few of Russia's great authors have had the temerity -- that Chekhov had -- to disappoint these expectations.

Even in these United States, with abundant outlet for public opinion, some writers of fiction cannot resist the temptation to chant midamericanism and discuss serious issues with the cocksureness of ignorance. In Russia, where as late as the end of the nineteenth century those who could read and write did not exceed fifteen per cent of the population, it was not unnatural for authors to believe they had a pastoral mission. Gorki succumbed early to that belief and as soon as he could read, was obsessed with a desire to instruct his neighbours -- in the image factory, or in the bake-shop, or among the knights of the road, or when with his first love. With the publication of his stories which met instant popular acclaim, he was prompted to heighten the monitorial tone of his writings -- commensurate with responsibility -- and with very few exceptions his fiction is marred here and there by didactic asides. Even in his best works he lapses into sermonizing, the reader being forewarned usually by a transition from robust language to a kind of banal bookishness. One gains the impression of a duality in style and personality.

We could not expect Gorki to be a monolith. Only professional logicians may have the appearance of uniformity, consistency, and consequentiality. Mortals, and artists in particular, are a duality, even a multiplicity of *Self*. In Gorki, however, the elements of personality hardly blend -- coexisting antipodally. An Ormazd and an Ahriman. Reject the one; accept the other. The preacher, the propagandist, the ratiocinator, the victim of books and of the Russian disease of philosophizing. Eliminating these we have the essential Gorki, keen of eye, precise of stroke, opulent of memory and experience.

Memory and experience. Here Gorki's strength lies. He is a memoirist, his best productions appearing in the second period, with *My Childhood*. In his early romantic tales, in the tramp sketches, in his descriptions of the lower and middle classes, in his post-revolutionary studies of grotesque Russians, in his plays, novels, and autobiographic works proper, he uses not inventive imagination but imaginative memory. With a prodigious exactness he recalls and can make you visualize the curve of a nose, the shape of a mouth, the colour of a beard, a gait or intonation caught twenty years ago in the Adirondacks, or during his childhood at Nizhni-Novgorod. In conversation he amazes you with this facility of retaining and picturing essential detail. In his written portraits, you must distinguish between such clever sketches as those drawn in New York or in Italy, and solid, Cézannesque images of his countrymen.

Again a crack in the bell. In conversation and in articles he has vehemently championed the West, its civilization, its science, its technical achievements -- steps toward Man's conquest of the physical world. Thus he has repeatedly attacked the Asiatic elements

in his countrymen; their sluggishness, rusticity, passivity, cruelty, ugliness, lack of culture. On such subjects, in conversation, in essays, or in *Tales of Italy*, he becomes that same bookish Gorki descanting on political issues, heavily dealing with the Intelligentsia, with Anatole France or Romain Rolland. Gorki is a Russian muzhik, a sturdy Volgar, a Slav with Asiatic cheek-bones. His Westernism is purely of the head, as is evident by his transformed face and gestures, should the visiting accordionist strike up a Volga tune, a gipsy plaint, a recitative of the Steppes.

He is powerful when he combines memory with experience -- not merely with tourist impressions. His mastery is thus limited to the description of Russia and Russians, a field of no modest dimensions. What a tremendous gallery of portraits -- those Volga hoboos, provincial eccentrics, temperamental merchants, perpetual seekers, petty, vulgar, stolid, sadistic individuals endowed with charm which the author cannot deny them despite the interfering dictates of his head. And those other Russians whom he has known and "experienced" -- Tolstoy, Chekhov, Korolenko, Andreyev, Lenin, Krasin... This vast and variegated world Gorki has absorbed and portrayed with unexcelled power. Limiting of the field in no way limits mastery. On the contrary. In der Beschränkung .. .

YET WATER RUNS AGAIN

BY EDWARD SAPIR

Water congeals, and wheels run down. So man
Has floats of ice upon his drowsing blood
Whereof the bottom cakes in winter mud.
Such times winds of direction will not fan

His spirit down the stream in that strange plan
Which he devised in humble hardihood,
But, holding nothingness well understood,
He's lost the hint of what he once began.

Yet water runs again, and wheels are wound.
So man forthwith will have himself unbound,
And with a sudden gust of certainty
Familiar winds will blow the ice aground
And the full deep of the blood's channel free
For spirit sailing down in gallantry.

PRELUDE

BY CONRAD AIKEN

I

Winter for a moment takes the mind; the snow
Falls past the arclight; icicles guard a wall,

The wind moans through a crack in the window,
A keen sparkle of frost is on the sill.

Only for a moment; as spring too might engage it,
With a single crocus in the loam, or a pair of birds;

Or summer with hot grass; or autumn with a yellow leaf.
Winter is there, outside, is here in me:

Drapes the planets with snows, deepens the ice on the moon,
Darkens the darkness that was already darkness.

The mind too has its snows, its slippery paths,
Walls bayoneted with ice, leaves ice-encased.

Here is the in-drawn room to which you return
When the wind blows from Arcturus: here is the fire

At which you warm your hands and glaze your eyes;
The piano, on which you touch the cold treble;

Five notes like breaking icicles; and then silence.

II

The alarm-clock ticks, the pulse keeps time with it,
Night and the mind are full of sounds. I walk
From the fireplace, with its imaginary fire,

To the window, with its imaginary view.

Darkness, and snow ticking the window: silence,
And the knocking of chains on a motor-car, the tolling
Of a bronze bell, dedicated to Christ.

And then the uprush of angelic wings, the beating
Of wings demonic, from the abyss of the mind:

The darkness filled with a feathery whistling, wings
Numberless as the flakes of angelic snow,

The deep void swarming with wings and sound of wings.
The winnowing of chaos, the aliveness

Of depth and depth and depth dedicated to death.

III

Here are the bickerings of the inconsequential,

The chatterings of the ridiculous, the iterations

Of the meaningless. Memory, like a juggler,

Tosses its coloured balls into the light, and again
Receives them into darkness. Here is the absurd,
Grinning like an idiot, and the omnivorous quotidian,
Which will have its day. A handful of coins,
Tickets, items from the news, a soiled handkerchief,
A letter to be answered, notice of a telephone call,
The petal of a flower in a volume of Shakespeare,
The program of a concert. The photograph, too,
Propped on the mantel, and beneath it a dry rosebud ;
The laundry bill, matches, an ash-tray, Utamaro's
Pearl-fishers. And the rug, on which are still the crumbs
Of yesterday's feast. These are the void, the night,
And the angelic wings that make it sound.

IV

What is the flower? It is not a sigh of colour,
Suspiration of purple, sibilation of saffron,
Nor aureate exhalation from the tomb.

Yet it is these because you think of these,

An emanation of emanations, fragile

As light, or glisten, or gleam, or coruscation,
Creature of brightness, and as brightness brief.

What is the frost? it is not the sparkle of death,
The flash of time's wing, seeds of eternity;

Yet it is these because you think of these.

And you, because you think of these, are both
Frost and flower, the bright ambiguous syllable
Of which the meaning is both no and yes.

V

Here is the tragic, the distorting mirror

In which your gesture becomes grandiose ;

Tears form and fall from your magnificent eyes,
The brow is noble, and the mouth is God's.

Here is the God who seeks his mother, Chaos --
Confusion seeking solution, and life seeking death.
Here is the rose that woos the icicle; the icicle
That woos the rose. Here is the silence of silences
Which dreams of becoming a sound, and the sound
Which will perfect itself in silence. And all
These things are only the uprush from the void,
The wings angelic and demonic, the sound of the abyss
Dedicated to death. And this is you.

THE CREEK

BY STERLING NORTH

WE must have been very poor the year that I was seven. The room that served as a kitchen and dining-room had a floor of wide pine boards scrubbed smooth and white. A bright rag rug covered the floor near the pump stand. An iron range in an alcove kept an oak fire day and night. We ate at a table covered with oil-cloth. If there were other things in the room I have forgotten them.

I think that my older sister must have been away most of the time for I never remember seeing her. Perhaps she came home Sundays and sat stiffly about the kitchen, but I am not sure. There is little else that I remember about the family except that my father's hair was already white, and he seemed to be tired after

the day's ploughing. I have only the faintest image of Mother, although she was kind to me.

A creek ran under a stone bridge a half a mile down the little dirt road, and it is an image of that creek that fills my mind. A boy of my own age would meet me at the bridge and fish with me. I do not remember his name but I remember that he had sun-browned skin and heavy brown hair and that he could run faster than I could. Shiners and chubs and sun-fish swam in the creek. We caught them on long, peeled, willow poles, with black string. When I rubbed my fingers on the smooth surface of the willow pole it gave me a pleasant, chilly feeling up and down my spine. We fished together all through the warm months, and when we grew tired of fishing we would wander along the creek. There was a little piece of marsh land where the creek ran into the lake, and there was coarse marsh-grass that turned brown in the fall. Muskrats built brown houses from the grass and wild ducks dropped into the little pool that the creek made.

In the morning I would swing on my swing under the oak-tree or play in the dust of the driveway. Sometimes I would climb on the low roof of the house and lie in the sun for an hour or more. In the afternoon I went to the creek.

But often I was lonesome. The boy that I met at the bridge did not understand about many things. We used to look for little stones on the beach along the edge of the lake. I found round, white or cloudy, quartz pebbles. Others were smooth and oval, and clear like water. He would hunt for little jagged bright stones. I told him that the stones he found were not pretty at all, that stones had to be round and smooth or they were not pretty. But I knew that he did not understand.

It was the same way with fish. Shiners and chubs are silver-coloured and swift in the water, so I kept all that I caught and took them home in a pail to put in the round tank near the barn. But the boy that fished with me liked the little sun-fish that were all colours. The sun-fish had prickly fins on their backs and they were not as smooth as minnows. I did not care for them at all.

So there was no use telling him that the days were little circles and the years big ones, or that God looked like the reflection of an old man on the surface of water. Like a reflection on water because you could see right through the face into the clearness beyond. The boy that I fished with would not have understood. I was not sure of these things myself so I thought I would ask Mother about them.

The room where I slept had two windows that opened toward the lake. The wind filled the white curtains till they curved like

sails. I liked the white curtains, but I think that I liked the white sheets on my bed even more. When I woke in the morning I would move one of my legs between the smooth sheets and shiver. I would never come down to breakfast until Mother came to get me.

I had forgotten to ask whether a year was a big circle or not, it did not trouble me any more. But I did want to know about God. I told Mother all that I thought about God and how his beard waved when the reflection on the surface was disturbed. She said that I should not say such things about God.

Then I asked her about Heaven, and if it had little streams filled with shiners and chubs. She said that she did not know, but that she thought there were streams. Her voice sounded like the wind that blew around the house at night. She was tired because she had to work in the fields.

I generally ate oatmeal out of a big blue bowl and then took crumbs out to the door-step to feed the sparrows. They flocked down about me wherever I went. Mother said I was like Saint Francis; but when I asked her to tell me about Saint Francis she said that she had read about him a long time ago but had forgotten everything except that he could call the birds down about him.

One morning Mother did not come to wake me and when I went downstairs Father was getting breakfast. He took me to Blue Mounds with the horse and buggy. It had rained the night before and the water stood in pools and in the ruts. When the wheels ran through the pools it upset their shining surfaces. I asked him why we were going to Blue Mounds. He said that Mother was sick and that he was taking me to my aunt's house for a few days. I wanted to know what it meant to be sick but Father could not tell me very well.

There were no streams in the town, nor any pools with minnows in them. I only saw a very few sparrows there. There were no places to find smooth white stones nor any boys like the one I fished with in the creek below the stone bridge. I just sat on the steps and wanted to go home. My aunt was good to me and gave me everything that I wanted to eat, but she had no blue bowl for my oatmeal. The first fall days had come and there was a fire in the fire-place some of the time. I would lie on my elbows looking into the fire, trying to see the flocks of fire-sparrows that started up from the burning log. A few leaves had turned yellow and were falling from the elm-trees. They blew up and down the streets of the little town. I thought the leaves seemed almost like birds when I saw them falling.

When Father came for me his face seemed more tired than I had ever seen it. I said nothing while we were driving home because

I was always a little afraid of him. I thought of the things I would do. I would swing under the oak-tree all morning; and then I would find my fish-pole where I had hidden it and go fishing after dinner. We had reached home before I asked if Mother were still sick. He made no answer, but when we went into the house he led me to the front bedroom where she lay so quietly it seemed as if she were not breathing. I could stand it no longer and I ran out of the house and down the road past the sumac hedge. No one called after me so I went as far as the bridge.

There was nobody at the bridge so I just sat on a big stone and looked down into the creek. It was flooded with brown water from the rains and had overrun its banks. A rainy wind blew through the willows and the coarse marsh-grass. I shut my eyes and tried to think of Heaven where Mother had said there might very well be streams with shiners and smooth white stones in them. All at once I was lonesome, and I started to go home up the wet, earthy-smelling road.

I walked into the kitchen where my sister sat gazing at the wall and yet beyond it.

"Aren't we going to have any dinner?" I asked.

She sat without moving; as if she did not know I had entered the room.

Then I lay down on the floor and cried and cried.

RELICS

BY LU YU

Translated From the Chinese by Kwei Chen

Opening my satchel, I cannot refrain from grieving!

On the broken pieces of faint silk the fragments of old paintings --

I yet know all their names.

The willow-trees are amply shady -- the bright days of spring still linger;

The peach-blossoms, uncommonly lovable -- just after rain; the sun anew ;

Light, swift, the orioles play here and talk to one another;

There, rolling, mountain-like, the surprising waves -- we hear them roaring!

Ah, such relics, works of the centuries; few survive!
Insects consume them and dust fouls them --
Beholding them, I have but tears; tears flow and flow . . .

BASQUE LAND

BY STEFAAN COUWENBERG

Translated From the Dutch by Bertus Hendrik Van Breemen.

"WHAT is it Piarrés says to the oxen?" asks Madeleine.
"He shouts, 'Beea-a!' That is Basque."

"Yes, Father."

If Piarrés had called "'*Allez*," she would have understood. She has travelled with me in France. But the Basque shouts, "'Beea-a!"

I have heard it many times to-day, for in this country it is the traditional day to move and scores of families have left their Basque dwellings -- have sold them in exchange for powerful persuasive dollars and pounds. Heaped high, the antique wagons, on creaking disc wheels, have followed one after the other in long lines over the sunny roads; farther inland. The Basque is forced to move. Money will modernize the age-old houses, build garages, and make tennis-courts where the archaic pelota game used to be played against the white fronton wall on the far stretching cancha. Slowly the Basque is retiring; deeper inland, before land-hawks, always farther from the Silver Shore, the beautiful Côte d'Argent. A few to Mexico and the Argentine, to Brazil, and Canada. The smaller farms, unworthy the attention of Yankee or Anglo-Saxon, are bought by Spaniards, with pesetas, and local colour is in a way kept alive.

This day at noon I saw such a Spanish invasion. The going ones: sober, tall, sturdy Basques. He, swart; she, light; a baby, some calves, a few chickens and rabbits in baskets between the furniture, on the single ox-wagon. The man halloed, "Beea-a!" The oxen pulled -- their huge halter and yoke fastened to the horns with strong creaking belts. The old disc wheels grated painfully as the high loaded wagons swayed slowly downward over the stony mountain-path. A miniature exodus.

And again I observed that the Basque resembles the Israelite. Possibly they are of the same race; for the Basque looks somewhat Egyptian and I instinctively feel that he is Semitic.

Up the mountain-path between rosy ferns and the yellowish blooming ajonje shrubs the new owners climb. New their harness, trimmed with sheep-skin and glittering brass; new the wagon on rattling spoke wheels, new the vari-coloured quilt on top.

As types. The man: small, sturdy, Spanish, with strong well-formed face, purple holiday shirt, small stiff barret pressed against his round head. She: powdered, high-heeled, petite, deep red cheeks, thick locklets -- holding a bird-cage. Chickens and rabbits in baskets between the furniture.

The Spaniard doesn't cry "Bee-a," but a light "Caramba." For the new wheels sink deep into the yard near the manure-pile. The little woman with the bird-cage looks down -- grumbling. Then she smiles.

They have arrived. Somewhere far off in the valley it sounds twelve. A little later I see her tripping back and forth in her new yard like a nervous chicken, from the wagon to the door, from the door to the wagon. But to-night the chimney will smoke cheerfully and in the low-ceilinged faintly lighted room spicy steam will rise from the favourite dish -- pork and pimentoes. And the Spaniard, who is a pretty nice fellow, sits down and eats slowly, elbows resting on the wiggling table; and the little woman keeps pattering round, stopping now and then to pat the bright-coloured checked pillows...Next year a baby, slightly dirtier and darker eyed than the one that died, will rest in the lap of the petite powdered Spanish woman. Her long brass ear-rings will tinkle joyously in the feeble lamplight. But I must write about the Basques.

The exotic Basque people, who will soon be only a relic -- as yet, living, loving, labouring. Another century and the pure Euscarian blood will have outpoured itself among that of the younger surrounding nations -- the race withered, exhausted by tuberculosis and all the other maladies common to ancient, isolated races.

One of the singular things is the language. Professor Uhlenbeck sees a relationship with the Caucasian group. The grammar has traits common to Chinese it is said.

I don't know much about this. I do know that this day early in January I got up and greedily inhaled the stimulus of healthy air flowing through my open window from whose sill a winter rose waved meekly; while far off the mountains of Spain, rose gold-brown to the clearing sky. I know that then I heard my neighbour,

the boy Gachaurra -- his voice high and fleeting like the fading gold of old idols -- blithely sing:

"Ene izar maitia
Ene charmagarria
Ichilic zur' ikhustera
Jiten nitreuxi leihcra . . ."

He sang his love-song full and free for he thought himself unobserved. His father, Manech, like his serene mother, the Etcheco-Andrea, was sleeping yet in the high four-post bed. After an hour, when they are drinking their morning coffee near the fireside in the living-room and Gachaurra is binding branches near the front door, he will softly, devoutly sing: "Agur Maya," ave Maria, mother of Jesus. For that his slender Maitia his beloved sang on Christmas Eve when all thought of love-making in the platan-bush behind the Elissaldea was far... far. That night all that Maitia's big almond eyes saw was incense floating around many candles. Glowing like a mystic flower in a dark golden nimbus, so Gachaurra watched Maitia stare at the Holiest of Holies.

Each Christmas night little lights descend from the mountains to the valley. In the dark open portico where holy candle-light sparsely penetrates and there is the faint sound of many voices, the unlighted lanterns with their copper-rimmed glass stand humbly waiting. On following nights they will be put to common use, when at milking-time their yellow shine will light bulky backs or glow softly on the mother of a wailing calf.

Always on New Year's Eve we are serenaded by our neighbour the old Improvisator and his choir of young men, singing at our door with the soft accompaniment of chulas and chérulas, small harps and flutes. The choir sings the warmly witty nightingale tune, Chorieta Burazagi and the naughty Salbatore, closing with the tender Plafiu Niz. Next, the Improvisator's voice is heard, high like that of Gachaurra and all Basque singers. In pure mellow playful Euscarian he praises maliciously the women and girls of the neighbourhood, calling them "Loriac" which means flowers. "Blooming but lightly fading ones" -- he salutes them in the various inflections of his "voix flutée," the choir taking up the old refrain which sounds like a Russian drinking-song. Also praise of my wife is sung by the Improvisator, who declares that she is "izar zilareskga," silver star. For he is full of appreciation of the kindness wherewith she all year round has greeted him in the Basque language and has taught our little one to wish him good-night with the words "agur piartsume." Even the beauty of the Spanish woman, our neighbour, he exalts, though the fairest in the eyes of the Basque is she whose well-formed neck rests on a strong body

crowned by a wealth of blond hair, set off by dark eyebrows.

After a day of laughter and kisses, work is taken up with force and vim. The corn has been in the barn since November; the winter rye is sown. But the soil has to be kept loose by means of the *bêche* for after one day of heavy rain the warm winter sun makes it as hard as clay.

And now hunters go out after birds and foxes, or, high on the mountains, after falcons and flocks of migrating wood-pigeons -- the light grey palombes -- caught by hundreds with large nets while flying in groups.

Now also it is slaughter time, connected with which are old traditions and venerations. According to custom the next neighbour does the butchering; the stately oldest Andrea prepares the carefully spiced *farcées*; after which, the traditional meal ceremony. On the snow-white, dark-blue striped damask cloth stand octagonal platters filled with Old Testamentic food. The women, sober and dignified as always, hardly touch the food, but keep serving. The men are stirred by ancient instinct, and long solid jaws attack great quantities of highly-seasoned food: chickens; veal cutlets with spiced gravy; purées of tomatoes and onions; baked *farcies* with garlic; stewed cabbage; and for dessert, whipped cream with nougat, and heavy Basque tart filled with pear-sauce or honey. Wine is not lacking, neither is brandy; the table-talk is spiced and animated, but not sugared.

Such is the Basque: a barbarian under his mask of calm dignity. But he also is the lonesome singer. "Ene izar maitia," he sings dreamily at dawn . . . "be greeted, dear one, my little star . . ."

And in the window of his sleeping-room, as in the times of Julian, he grows a basil and a lone heliotrope.

EXTRA GOOD ONES

Fourteen Great Detective Stories. Edited, with an Introduction, by Vincent Starrett. 16mo. 400 pages. The Modern Library. 95 cents.

GILBERT SELDES

FIRST, Mr Starrett has done a good job. So have the publishers in avoiding the title, "*The Fourteen Best* . . .", because that leads to irritation. All the stories included are good and half of them certainly rank with another half dozen or so, as

the best of the lot. Especially to the editor's credit is his capacity to pick a good story out of a lot of bad ones; the little man with a piece of string who serves as the detective in stories by Baroness Orezy has always bored me; and Mr Starrett has found *The Fenchurch Street Mystery* which is extraordinarily good and shows the detector who reconstructs cases out of newspaper clippings at his most ingenious. On the other hand, he has put in *The Problem of Cell 13* which is only a detective story because a detective is the principal character; it tells how he escaped from a cell on a bet. Davis's famous *In the Fog* is really a spoof detective story, but is legitimate; and one of the best yarns, *The Absent-Minded Coterie*, infuriated me because it is too subtle or -- as I hope -- it is part of a series and the unexplained portion of the mystery is carried on to another story. I may say that the collection begins as all collections should, with a tale by Poe (this time it is *The Purloined Letter*) proceeds (correctly) to Conan Doyle (*The Red-Headed League* -- a fine story, I confess against my inclination to choose another) and then comes quick to its climax in *The Blue Cross*, one of the very best of the Father Brown stories.

The requisite nowadays is a new means of detection and a passion for this novelty leads people like R. Austin Freeman (who has an amazing gift in developing his plots) to the dull scientifics of Dr Thorndyke. (See, for example, *A Certain Doctor Thorndyke*, recently published, in which half the book is an adventure story quite above the average, but totally unnecessary in relation to Dr Thorndyke's dull microscopic investigations of bits of dust.) The supreme merit of Chesterton is that almost all his explanations are connected with ethics, that is, fundamentally with character. Father Brown is a detective because he is a Catholic priest -- and that gives the tales, apart from their intellectual interest in the Chestertonian system, novelty as pure detective stories. Philo Vance (in S. S. Van Dine's series of full length novels) is at pains to assert that he finds the criminal by considering the crime critically as a work of art -- but I do not believe him; he is using the old methods of common sense, deduction, a bit of science, and the rest. The excellent Hewitt, first successor to Holmes in point of time, is a good simple detective -- he works on clues as a good detective should -- at least in stories. Luther Trant uses association tests (which somehow leave me as cold as Craig Kennedy's fantastic inventions -- properly omitted from this collection). The blind Carrados uses imagination to reconstruct a scene or, in this case, *The Tragedy at Brookbend Cottage*, to construct one in advance of the crime.

All methods are good if they make good reading. In *The Case of Oscar Brodski* Mr Freeman tells the story of a murder with complete detail and tells how the clues were swept away; in the second part he tells how the clues were reconstructed -- and this story is as interesting as most of those which suddenly disclose the unsuspected

murderer in the last paragraph. In *The Age of Miracles* a story is again directly told with no specific indication that a crime has been committed; toward the end the detective forces a sort of restitution by threatening a man in obscure terms; and the last line of the story gives the whole thing point by showing that there had been a murder.

This does not mean that a good story is the essential thing and that detection is secondary; it means only that the method does not matter. In *The Age of Miracles*, for example, the moment you know the facts, the whole story shows itself as a piece of detection. The true believer in this type of fiction is rapidly becoming indifferent to his own capacity to guess a criminal's identity. Mystery is part of the fun, but after the first three thousand stories the greater pleasure is in the working out. I have read (and hastily forgotten) any number of detective stories in which I was completely baffled as to the outcome, and completely indifferent because the relation of the story, the characters and the plot, did not hold attention. And I have spotted a criminal in the third chapter and remained entranced by the skilful complexities of the story.

I do not know whether psychoanalysts have gone to the bottom of the almost universal passion for police romances. Probably it is due to a variety of suppressed desires -- to commit murder and to prevent murder, to live dangerously and to love policemen. I find my interest heightened whenever the author plays fair with me, makes himself my adversary, but a respectable one. This gives two conflicts to the story -- between the criminal and the detective, between the author and the reader. And a double satisfaction at the end.

BRIEFER MENTION

Mr. Hodge and Mr. Hazard, by Elinor Wylie (12mo, 256 pages; Knopf: \$2.50). Of Miss Wylie's books this is the most satisfactory. Here is pathos pinioned with a glancing stroke and displayed with the light sad grace of an ironic princess whose insight has been nurtured in studious isolation. Capricious ladies smile with indulgent disdain on the poet's vagaries, the poet whose innocence and whose depth, whose shabbiness and whose pride, make him, in these fragile scenes, so singular, so chastised a figure.

The Greene Murder Case, by S. S. Van Dine (12mo, 388 pages; Scribner's: \$2) is easily the best of this author's three. Grudgingly (as a reference in the text shows) Philo Vance has given up some of his insufferable

conceits; and in the space left by the omission of his bad English and presumably good Latin, the author has been able to develop his story with completeness. It is the story of a household destroyed -- one member after the other. As each one is suspected, each death narrows the field of possibilities; finally two are left and -- you do not guess which is which. Actually the story would be more logical with the ending reversed, but the author has been obsessed with the idea of keeping the identity secret as long as possible and has sacrificed the story a little. There is a long literary background for the crime at the end; and two hints are dropped with exquisite precision exactly where no one picks them up. This is the first of the Philo Vance stories which is not based on an actual case -- and fiction has bettered fact.

Cézanne, by Julius Meier-Graefe, with 106 plates in collotype, translated from the German by J. Holroyd-Reece (4to, 66 pages; London, Benn; New York, Scribner's: \$22.50). "The quivering dancing dot in the chaos can be painted. If the attempt fails, one had better not paint at all, for art, today, exists only to collect our conceptions of the world. Courbet may have had such a vision of it in a dream when he thought to have discovered realism; Manet had an inkling of it when he made his demand for contemporanéité. Both were too glib, too surprised by their own novelty to penetrate the shell to the kernel ; they painted perfect fragments. A Cosmos is what matters. If the cosmos is as tattered as ours, art will gather it together in tatters." This, too, is glib. Very smart writing indeed. But does it mean anything? Surtout, does it really clear up the mystery of Cézanne to the anxious enquirer who has hitherto been baffled by it? Yet Meier-Graefe has his followers. It is a case, no doubt, of enthusiasm breeding enthusiasm rather than reason breeding reason.

THE THEATRE

(excerpt)

by Gilbert Seldes

Unwilling to wait an additional week for the appearance of Miss Mae West, I travelled far to see *Diamond Lil*, to a place differently named by every member of my party, but roughly definable as an hour's taxi-ride, at top speed, from the Bossert Hotel in Brooklyn. The theatre there (Teller's Shubert by name) is gorgeous in gilt and plush and the drop curtain has advertisements of such old-fashioned things as stoves and addresses on Broadway -- not meaning Manhattan. It seemed to me that ninety per cent of the audience came at the last minute and bought tickets, as one does for the movies. Before this simple audience Miss West unrolled a melodrama made of the most sordid materials: drunkenness, dope, white slavery, murder, and the like. None of these was rebuked, none glorified. In Miss West's works there are not exactly tears for things as they are, but a sort of half-interested constata-

tion. Unenergetic as ever, moving sullenly about the stage as if it pained her, forgetting her lines, dropping out of character and into it again as if that didn't matter (and it doesn't) Miss West walked magnificently through the play murmuring acrid nothings. "You can be had," she said, without emphasis to the Salvation Army captain at the end of the first act; "I knew you could be had," she said to the same man as police captain at the final curtain, with as little urgency and no triumph. Against her own grudgingly offered movements she placed hundreds of people in action. The final scenes take place in the back-room of an old saloon with no less than three parties of slummers, dancing waiters in profusion, prostitutes, drunkards, cab-drivers, politicians; everyone sang and danced ; and Miss West, reluctant in action as usual, made the one mistake of her career when she sang badly a thin version of *Frankie and Johnny*. It was horribly, fascinatingly wrong. Experts in Mae West assure me that this play is not as good as *Sex* -- as a medium for Miss West's talents; it is much more closely drawn together than *The Wicked Age*, but is not necessarily better on that account, for Miss West is at her best when things drift along with as little plot as possible. But she had a moment which came out of the plot, a touch of dramatic imagination and morbidity -- as if Wedekind had collaborated with Sardou. She had killed a woman and as the body rested in a chair, she suddenly loosed the long black hair and flung it over the staring eyes, and as someone came to the door began to comb the dead woman's hair. "What are you doing?" her husband asks. "Something I've never done before."

I am quite prepared to be rapped over the knuckles for saying that a bit of this sort of thing would have helped Miss Le Gallienne's Hedda Gabler. Her own creation of *Hedda* was a bit synthetic, and I suggest that the next time this play is done, the actress taking the part should make Hedda a totally uninteresting woman, without any passions, with nothing morbid except her lack of vitality, and explain her catastrophic influence on people as one explains the mischief caused by a child kept in on a rainy day. For we have had Hedda over- and under-sexed, had her intellectual, and nerve-racked, and passionate; it's time we had her as a fool. In that case the other characters would all be different -- and more interesting. The poet would be robust and Tesman an impassioned scientist heartily bored, when he isn't terribly annoyed, by his cantankerous wife. This would relieve the play of the heavy-handed satire which now makes Tesman a bore (in the manner of Marco Mit.tions -- for Ibsen really upset the apple-cart about the American small town fifty years ago) and would give us some reason for fresh interest in Hedda.

It is the misfortune -- for actresses -- that *Hedda Gabler* is usually judged by a single brief scene -- the burning of the manuscript. I have seen this done violently and quietly and in all degrees be-

tween. But as I am unable to believe in the emotional significance of most of the events leading up to it, the scene has never affected me, so I would like to see it done as sheer malice.

JULY

THREE POEMS

BY CARL JOHN BOSTELMANN

FOUR O'CLOCK RESOLUTION

I have just discovered
There is a symphony

Of molecules

Even as there is

A music of spheres!

I have just been told

By someone --

I forget whom --

There are ears,

Other than those of men,
Which can hear
Automatically

And without effort

Those harmonies of sound
Inaudible

To men!

Something should be done
About this!

Will not someone --

I don't care who --
Any person of vision --
Please put this

In the form

Of a motion?

TWO BLIND BOYS WALKED TOGETHER

Two blind boys walked together down Eighth Avenue

In their darkness.
One carried a cane in his right hand,
The crooked elbow of his free arm locked tightly
Like the link of a chain through the crooked elbow-link
Of the other.

One had once had eyes for seeing.

He carried his cane jauntily

Like a gentleman on Easter morning.

The other had been born with dead eyes,
Like a mole into a world of unseen shapes.
His was a crooked right arm curved

Like a chain link.

As they walked together in step,

One's mind told him he walked too slowly.
The other's mind warned he walked

Too rapidly.

One smiled -- a deep, internal, silent smile

It was -- as they paraded down Eighth Avenue

Past the flaming, sight-arresting window signs

Along the sidewalk. He had once known colour.

He had known the spectrum one time.

His heavy-lidded companion clutched the free arm's elbow
Desperately. He had never known.

He trusted.

Two blind boys walked down Eighth Avenue
Together in their darkness.

I HAVE WET MY FEET IN MANY WATERS

I, who love many things
But who love wading as I do few other things,
Have wet my feet in many waters.

Ankle-deep in the lacy fringe,
The blue of the Atlantic
I have wandered,

Within my bathing woolens
Like a sandwichman
Between his signs.

From the Cliff House, where surges
Leap high to spray the seals basking on the rocks,

I have followed an old trail

Around the shore, almost to the Presidio,

Because I knew combers burst white,

Boiling with vigour, exploding with riot, at Land's End
Where my feet could dangle in the turmoil.

At the brink of Niagara,
At the trough to oblivion,
I have extended my feet to the water.

At the base of the precipice, at the bottom
Where green masses plunge to crash --
Down, down, deep down --
I have stood on the drenched rocks,
Saturated with rain from the collision of waters.
Five feet from the thunder, I have stood on the rocks

Barefoot.

On rivers and lakes I have ridden in boats,
And straddled the bow, like a figurehead,
My feet dragging against old, old waters,
Little currents eddying between my toes
As between twigs of a fallen tree in a spring flood.

I have wet my feet in many waters.

ROOTS

BY JOSEPH GAER

THE grass was yellow from lack of rain and beyond the lawn,
on the other side of the dilapidated fence, the garden was
baking in the heat. If it did not rain soon there would be no
tomatoes nor cabbage for the winter, and no corn for the chickens
and cows. Anna sighed.

Buster lay at the entrance from the kitchen to the cellar with
his eyes closed and his head on the door-step. Anna wished that
she too could find a cool spot to rest in, but the white cherries had
to be canned or they would spoil. She sat on a low stool before a
pail of them, a pail of water, and a large basin. She picked up a
handful of cherries, dipped it in the murky water, inspected it

hurriedly for wormy fruit, then threw her palm open into the basin.

Buster raised his head suddenly and growled, then rose lazily, and began to bark as he trotted out of the kitchen. From behind the wagon-house beyond the yard, came the crunching sound of light wheels on cinders. Anna rose with difficulty and walked into the yard, wiping her hands on her apron as she waited for her husband to drive up to the house. She could see that David Fishbein was with him, and she came a little nearer to the gate.

"Well, well! I'm back again, Mrs Burnstein," David called from the high seat of the little wagon.

That was his unfailing greeting every year.

"I'm glad you are, Mr Fishbein!" Anna answered and wiped her forehead.

Her husband, Harry, and their yearly visitor, David, got off the wagon and unloaded the packages. Anna held the gate open for them. When they had entered the house, she still remained near the gate looking vacantly at the blue sky shimmering against the horizon. Harry came out of the kitchen with a handful of cherries.

"Any mail?" Anna asked, as she always asked when Harry returned from town.

"No," he replied sulkily, as if she had blamed him for the world's neglect.

Still swinging the cherries into his ready mouth one by one, Harry led away the horse and wagon. Anna returned to her task; now that the work had been broken she hated to resume it; but it had to be done or the cherries would spoil.

David came down into the kitchen from his room upstairs in overalls, a blue shirt, and heavy boots. The first thing he did on arriving for his two weeks' stay on the farm was to change his city clothes for overalls, and he kept on wearing them till he had to leave.

"Whew! It's hot!" he exclaimed as he slumped into a chair near the table.

"Must be awful in New York!" Anna half-asked, half-affirmed, minimizing their discomfort by comparing it with the city's greater discomfort. Then she sighed and added: "Would you like to have something to eat?"

"No, thank you! I had my dinner just before Harry met me at the station."

"Then have some cherries."

David took a few cherries, inspected them as if they were for sale, and began to eat them critically.

"These cherries somehow are never as good as the cherries at home," David remarked.

"At home" meant the little Bessarabian village from which he had come to New York twenty years before.

"No, somehow they aren't," Anna agreed.

"And where are the children?" David asked.

"Ben and Willie are working again in the porcelain factory in town, and Babe is over at the Nieces."

Buster came into the kitchen and settled again in the cellarway, the coolest spot in the house. David looked at him -- a shaggy collie -- and remarked that he was getting old.

"Just a nuisance," Anna said and yawned.

"And how is Dick?"

"Dick?" Anna raised her eyes, puzzled.

"He was sick when I left last year."

"Oh, that horse is always getting into trouble!" After a pause she added: "He's all right now."
There was nothing else to talk about and they were silent.

David rose and said, "Well, I guess I'll go out and see what the place looks like."

Anna stopped work for a few minutes; her eyes followed him. She knew where he was going. Going to see his trees.

He paused in front of the house and looked down the slope. He noticed that the hay was not yet cut and was pleased, for he liked to cut hay. That was really why he took his vacation early in July. He walked across the familiar farm-yard, observing the untidy woodpile near the brooder-house, then made his way to the little orchard where the trees were.

He had been coming to the farm for his vacation every summer for more than ten years, and once during the third or fourth vacation had planted in the neglected orchard four apple-trees and one pear-tree. He had planted them with his own hands and had carried manure for them from the barn in an old discarded pan. And every day of those two weeks he had watered them with care. They had been planted out of season, but they took root, and three of them, two apples and the pear, had survived the winter. The next year his heart was filled with joy at the sight of the thriving young trees, and after that the place of his summer's rest was determined by immutable law. After helping Anna in the garden, or fixing the pasture fence for Harry, David would come by the little orchard and stop to look at his trees, marvelling at their size. Marvelling as a father might at the realization that his daughters have grown tall and lovely beyond words. When in bloom, Babe told him, they were the prettiest things on earth. David knew he would never see them in May because they didn't cut hay till July and because his employer would not let him go so early. But when the sun went down and Harry went to milk the cows, David would watch the sunset through the branches of his trees. And there he sometimes wondered how it was that in a life where one moment of joy can cause so much regret and one moment of pain can cause one to forget both death and life, there should be so much pleasure in the presence of a tree one calls one's own.

As he walked through the parched weeds and grass he looked at his heavy boots and overalls and thought how good it was to be away from the store and from dry-goods and from women-customers and the life that was life to him in New York. Suddenly something fell softly on him. He brushed his palm nervously against the back of his neck and noticed a yellow and green caterpillar fall to the ground. Looking up at the nearest tree, he saw huge nests of chrysalises supported at the crutches of the branches, and the twigs heavy with caterpillars. The leaves on the tree were eaten clear through and spotted on the back. He hurried to his own trees and walked around them anxiously. They too had been stricken!

"Hello, Mr Fishbein!" a young voice shouted from the road beyond the orchard.

"Hello, Ethel!" David shouted back and waved his hand.

Ethel, whom the family still called Babe though she was nearly fourteen, came across the field to him. She was a lanky girl with a long neck and small head that made one think of a young camel. And as she walked her bare knees touched each other.

Ethel grinned happily as she came near. To her the arrival of David on the farm was always a great event. During his stay he gave her more attention than she received during the rest of the year. And he always brought her little gifts because she promised to take care of his trees.

"What's happened to the trees?" David asked her.

"No rain," Ethel answered simply. "If we don't have rain soon there's goin' t'be no corn neither. There's goin' t'be hell t'pay, Mr Niece just said."

David looked at his trees, then asked pleadingly, "Is there nothing one can do to save them?"

"I donno."

In the evening visitors came to the house as they always did when they knew of David's arrival. Sam Leibowitz, the tailor, came from town with his entire family, to visit the Burnsteins and welcome their guest. Sam, who was a permanent subscriber to the Morgen Journal and often went to New York to make purchases for the little store that he kept in conjunction with his tailor shop, felt greatly superior to the three Jewish farmers of the vicinity. He conversed freely and readily on all world events, and at home in his front room he had a bookcase full of books in sets. His business in town had succeeded to the extent of a bank account and an automobile, a Buick. Sam felt superior to the Jewish farmers of the vicinity, but his was the only Jewish family in a town hostile to Jews, and he was driven to associate with the farmers. And the farmers associated with him and with each other more out of necessity than from choice. Each in turn found a sufficient cause for feeling superior to the other, that of Aaron Stein, Harry's neighbour, dating back a hundred years to a time when his great-grandfather was a Rov (religious leader) in a little village in Poland. When David came, however, they all congregated after the day's work to welcome him.

They were sitting on the wide veranda stairs watching the fire-flies down the slope of the hill where the darkness began to swell like a transparent mist.

"What then, it doesn't rain much in the city neither?" Aaron asked David.

"What a question!
doesn't rain there!"

"I don't know what we'll do if it keeps up much longer," Aaron

whistled between his missing teeth. "It's fifteen years now that I've been farming in New Jersey and I haven't seen a summer like this."

"You say that every summer," Sam objected.

"How is your well, Aaron?" Harry asked suddenly.

"Why?"

"Our spring is almost dry," Anna explained.

"If you need water for cooking come and get it," Aaron said sulkily.

"They say there's going to be another war soon between Russia and Japan," said Sam, trying to change the subject. "Now, if there's going to be a fight between the Russians and the Japanese again, it'll be ten times worse than the last war."

"Let them fight. Who cares?" MHarry's youngest son, Ben, bit his hard fingernails and added: "If you had taken my advice last year, Dad, and dug an artesian well you wouldn't have to worry about water every summer."

Harry did not reply.

Anna rose from the steps with difficulty and entered the house to prepare tea and jam. The heat and the day's work had sapped the energy from her worn body. All she wished was to lie down, But she had to offer tea and jam to her guests. She always did when they came to visit.

Sam mocked. "If it doesn't rain here it

[data missing]

"Who wants tea on a hot night like this?" Sarah Leibowitz protested in her shrill voice. But the men filed into the large front room and seated themselves awkwardly around the large table. The smell of manure and varnish mingled with the broken talk of farm-problems as they drank hot tea. Aaron wiped his heavy brown moustache and handed his empty cup to Anna without a word. How she hated to get up and go to the kitchen again. But these were her guests.

David listened eagerly to the talk. Only the night before, he reflected, he had been sitting in his uncle's house in the Bronx listening to a lecture on marriage by his Aunt Rivkah. He had

heard it so often it made no impression. He was glad to be away from home and from those lectures.

The talk around the table had turned on Jerusalem.

"Td like to go there myself," said Sam with enthusiasm.

"What would you do in Palestine? Farm?' Aaron asked.

"Why should I farm? Doll farm here?' Sam's feelings were hurt. "Do you think all the Jews that go to Palestine go there to farm? If they all farmed they would have to go naked and barefoot. If we are going to rebuild Palestine, don't think it will be like it used to be! We'll make it the most modern place in the world. Only the other day I read in the paper how they are trying to put electricity all through Palestine."

"Palestine or no Palestine," said Ben and yawned, "I'm going to bed." And he went upstairs.

That was a signal for the others. Sam and his family were the last to leave. Finally the glaring eyes of his Buick swept the blackness of the entire horizon as it turned around the yard towards the road to town. Harry, Anna, and David stood near the gate watching the car leave the yard. A faint breeze rose. Harry wetted one finger and raised it above his head.

"It's from the east," he said. "I hope it'll bring rain."

David was the first to wake the next morning -- disturbed by the cackling of chickens and crowing of roosters. He dressed lazily and went downstairs. Although the sun had barely risen, the dense hot air was already hard to breathe. With Buster trailing behind, he sauntered to the orchard and walked around his trees like one visiting a sorrowing friend. The leaves teemed with insects and he noticed the trunk of the pear-tree was injured at the base where brownish sap had thickened on the wound. He walked away with lowered head, his hands clasped on his back. When the chickens saw him coming they raced expectantly to meet him.

"Why did you get up so early?" Harry asked as he came out of the house, blinking in the glare of sun.

"I just couldn't sleep!"

"Well, I think I'll be cutting hay to-day," Harry said, knowing how anxious David was to run the mower and the rake.

"That's good!" David responded eagerly, in anticipation of the

fragrant work. But at breakfast, after Ben and Willie had gone, Anna reminded Harry that they were nearly out of water for the kitchen.

"Better drive over to Aaron's," Anna suggested.

"I'd rather get it from town," Harry said, and went to harness Dick into the flat wagon.

David gathered the rusty milk cans that were used in dry summers for water, and scoured them thoroughly.

"If you want to wash the cans better wait until you get to town," Anna reproached him amiably.

When they came to town they stopped to ask Sam Leibowitz if the paper predicted rain. Then they filled the cans with fresh water and started for home. By the time the water was put away in the shed near the kitchen and the horse unharnessed and watered, it was noon and Harry was tired. He decided to put off the hay-cutting. The next day, he hoped, would not be so hot.

But the next day was as hot, if not hotter. A week passed with the heat rising, it seemed. The hay was cut. Too little, Harry said, to be worth the bother. And mostly weed at that. But David enjoyed the cutting and raking; and the coat of tan that he took back each vacation was already tinting his face and neck. They went for water twice, and David helped to devise an ice-box made of rags and boxes. One evening he visited the Jewish neighbours, and there, over tea and jam, heard again their complaint against the Lord. Deep within him David felt a pleasing contentment -- contentment that he was dependent on an employer who paid with checks each week, rain or no rain.

David asked Harry whether the heat might kill the trees. "To the devil with them! I'm worried about the corn!" Harry said with anger, and David never mentioned the trees again.

Every drop of water that was used Anna watched like a miser, and emptied the slop-pail on the plants in the garden. Once David found himself carrying the pail of used water to his trees. Then as he distributed it, instead, amongst the too numerous tomato plants he felt the joy of being unselfish and good. And the feeling persisted for a day or two.

The cloudless days continued until one morning the sky was overcast and Anna was radiant with the hope of rain. "Thank God," she said, "if it rains now it'll not be too late for the corn and the garden."

It did not rain all day and the following morning the ground was as dry as it had been. But the humidity had increased and the clouds were darker. David came down to breakfast in his city clothes and Anna and Harry looked at him as if he were already far away. He seemed to personify the city to them, the city that in envy they vaguely blamed for all their misfortunes on the farm.

After breakfast Harry brought the wagon to the door and the two men, with Babe between them on the seat, hurriedly drove to town. There David treated Babe to ice-cream and bought a box of candy for her.

"Here," he said softly, "and let me know how the trees do after the rain."

A drizzle began to spray the windows as the train raced through wide stretches of parched land. David had a newspaper in his hand, but his eyes were on the dwarfed corn in the fields, and the dreary squat farm-yards, and the distant trees that swerved by slowly with the passing of the train. The monotonous thudding of the wheels lulled the passengers to brooding silence. David looked calmly at the changing scene outside. The rain might last and the trees be saved. The trees might be saved, he thought calmly, but not with indifference.

IMAGE AND AFTER-IMAGE

BY S. FOSTER DAMON

Broad sea -- broad sky --

The sole perpendicular is I.

Silence . . . but for the thin, incessant
Sparkle and hiss on the long crescent
Of beach that ends, as it began,
Without one single trace of man.

Then I, too, will be naked of

All civilized appurtenances!

The only eye is the sun above:

Off, clothes! from my suppressed physique!
-- O gigantic winds of these huge expanses,
Vast air-serpents writhing across the sea,
Come! cool these yet un-sunburned curves.
Stripped, one is almost something Greek.

(If one could but strip as easily

From one's temperament the modern nerves!)

Nothing in Nature ever rankles;
Yet a faint breeze responds. I stand

On this rock that juts out like a shelf

Just under water, and feel the bland

Tide lifting and sinking about my feet.

But look -- ! wavering from my ankles

The scattered image of myself

Flaps and bulges incomplete;

Knees knock and bandy, head swells to rings,
Corrupting the surface of the sea

With visionary anatomy

In most unGreek foreshortenings;

While bits of sun skip round its head,
Dancing nimbly, higher and higher,

As though the summer ocean bred
Enormous fleas of white fire.

The worm's-eye view.

-- I can leap head-first

My skull meeting the watery skull,
And in one delectable white burst
Perform a curious miracle:

Each telescoping the other's shape
Into invisibility,

Reappearing on the seascape

As cool and clean as one can be.

(Even as at night, when blackness teems,
I see my broken image tremble

Upon the encroaching tide of dreams,
Then flicker, bulge, and reassemble.

Brain-first against that shadowy brain
Into the invisible I sink,

Bursting back refreshed again

Upon the morning's yellow brink.)

Well, it is time that I immerse
My twin selves in oblivion.

But first, before I shall dive in,
I utter (Greek-like) to the Sun
A prayer half jest, half genuine,
Eye to eye with the universe.

The sun is hot to human gaze.
Hail and farewell! --
I plunge --

emerge --
And blinded, cling to the weed-grown verge,

A praiser dazzled by his praise!
For a black sun blossoms in the skies
And leaps to keep before my eyes.

GERMAN LETTER

by Thomas Mann



Mann in the early period of his writing career

Munich - June, 1928

OF Durer, the four hundredth anniversary of whose death we are commemorating in Germany, I cannot think without reverting as well to the pure and exalted name of Nietzsche, who so epitomizes our history and our future that his name evokes in us at once the profoundest memories and the highest hopes. It was through Nietzsche that I was first enabled to behold with sympathy and perception the world of Durer, to grasp it emotionally. For youth, naturally averse to history, can scarcely approach the archaic but by way of the modern which does not instruct us in the past but illuminates it for us. Does the Nuremberger's name occur in Nietzsche? I could not say. But when he speaks of Schopenhauer, on whose authority Wagner was encouraged to strengthen his feminine art by a principle of asceticism, when he says: "What does it signify that a real philosopher should embrace the ascetic ideal, a truly self-dependent intellect like Schopenhauer, a man and knight with eyes of bronze, who has the courage of his own identity, who knows how to stand alone and does not look first for predecessors and for hints from superiors?" -- what has he in mind ; or if he is thinking of something else, what does he mean by this unusually precise and detailed description of moral spontaneity and manliness? Would one be wrong in writing on the margin of this passage the name of Dürer? It would be well to add the laudatory verses with which Goethe, notwithstanding occasional classi-

cistic disapproval of "turbid form and groundless fancy," characterizes Diirer's art, speaking of its solidity and manliness, its strength and steadfastness:

"Thr festes Leben und Mannlichkeit,
Ihre innere. Kraft und Standigkeit."

Diirer, Goethe, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Wagner -- here, in one "place," with two marginal notes, we should have it all at once: an entire nodus of destiny, a constellation, a world, the German world, with the ambitious dramatization of itself, its magical and intellectualistic disintegration, coming last. Yet not last -- for side by side with the great prestidigitator and conjurer, stands the conqueror and seer; coexistent with the play-actor of the myth is the myth itself -- heroic and sacrificial, prophetic of a new and higher mankind.

But as for the intellectual premises and origins of the ethical tragedy in Nietzsche's life, of this deathless European drama of self-conquest, self-discipline, and self-crucifixion, with the expiatory destruction of the mind as a heart-rending and brain-rending consummation -- where is such to be found if not in the protestantism of the Naumburg pastor's son, if not in that moralistic atmosphere (Nordic, German, bourgeois, typically Diirer) which is exemplified in the engraving *Knight, Death, and Devil*, which remains -- through all Nietzsche's migrations -- the native region of his soul? "I like in Wagner," he writes in 1868 to Rohde, "what I like in Schopénhauer: the ethical quality, the Faustian element -- cross, death, and tomb." About the same period, at Basel, he heard the Saint Matthew's Passion three times during the week of Easter. . . . Cross, Death, and Tomb! They compose a further ingredient of the Diirer, Germanic mentality. Arms are crossed devoutly, with "manliness and steadfastness," as knighthood maintains itself between death and devil, through Passion, the smell of the crypt, sympathy with suffering, Faustian melancholia -- and again the same thing can be an idyllic domiciled piety -- a receptive peace -- while the sun prints the bottle-glass design of window upon wall, imparting warmth to the death's head upon the sill, and an humble and restricted mind is kept responsive to greatness and the sense of eternity by hour-glass and reclining lion...

What else? What more in the world, and what is it, but love, remembrance, norm, canon, moulding career and character as they descend through a line of masters and are embodied within us all? The graphic German: for the Jove of the German artist, plastic or verbal, pertains to delineation, not colour. Then also! much that is magnificent and much that is chaste, much that is proud and much that is hard of acceptance, both aspects evident to all. Is

this not the fountain-head of masterliness itself, the noblest idea that we possess as a nation, the highest and most honoured, and the one that contributes most towards unity? For what rank, power, honour, or brilliancy would take precedence in the German mind over the homely and subtly majestic ways of the "Master"? And in what could people of various opinions reach fuller agreement, even to-day, than in that idea of integrity, of loyalty to work, of authenticity, of maturity in living and art, of moral and intellectual leadership, which is subsumed under the concept of "Master"? The term combines respectability with that trait of audacity which Goethe ascribes to every artist. Industry here becomes depth, and accuracy greatness. Patience and heroism, dignity and uncertainty, traditionalism and insistence upon the unforeseen all commingle to form a unit. Ah, and what inadequacy -- ethnic, innate, inherited from prehistory -- what angular clumsiness, is not present in this eternity-ridden world of German art, with its antinomies of disorder and precision, metaphysics and vague meditation, childishness and age, scurrility and demonicism, ashamed yet outspoken? Philistinism and pedantry, strenuous plodding, self-torment, exacting calculation -- all unified with that absoluteness, insatiability, and high necessity which courage brings to fruition: this refusal to spare oneself in anything, this inviting of the last difficulty, this willingness to see a work ruined and made unfit for others rather than allow it in any particular to fall short of its utmost.

To think of Durer is to love, to smile, to remember. Such remembrance implies all that is deepest and most impersonal, all that lies beyond and under the corporeal boundaries of our ego while yet determining and nourishing it. Durer is history as myth, history which is always present and incarnate. For we are individuals far less than we hope or fear to be.

BOOK REVIEWS

DISSECTING ANGUISH
by Conrad Aiken

Children and Fools. By Thomas Mann. Translated from the German by Herman George Schefauer. 2mo. 264 pages. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

* Published in The Dial, March, April, May, 1924.

THE process by which one comes to know an author, or that

part of him which appears in his books, is exactly the process by which one comes to know a person in the flesh. One moves from one impression to another; he is this to-day, and that to-morrow; at first he seems predominantly sad, later one finds that this sadness conceals an undercurrent of irony or secret glee; his face is immobile, but one discovers that his talk is full of emotional or affective overtones; or one moves forward from a first impression of copiousness to a second one of essential thinness. And by slow evolution, all these separate impressions fuse in one image. The glee is added to the sadness, the thinness to the copiousness, the mysterious hint to the impassivity. One acquires a single image, in which, if the first magic of mystery is lost, one finds a kind of definite consolation in the fact that it now quite clearly seems to belong to a category.

The present reviewer's acquaintance with Thomas Mann, or his books, has been of that sort. It has been kaleidoscopic, confused, directionless, delicious. Buddenbrooks created the first image -- solid, distinct, forthright, almost of the Arnold Bennett order. A four-square three-decker, but with a German, or Gothic, distortion. *Death in Venice** broke this image, precisely as a dropped pebble breaks an image in a surface of water. This was something new -- here was an affective overtone not experienced before. What, exactly, was this added something? As before, the story was simple and direct and naturalistic. The secondary characteristics were all, apparently, of the realistic school, if one may be permitted so loose a term. But decidedly there was something else.

On the surface, everything was clear and simple and distinct. The history -- what there was of it -- moved with no subterfuges to its tragic and quiet climax. And nevertheless, there was this queer something else, this nameless undertone, deep and melancholy, which gave the story a different quality, and gave the author, in one's memory, a new reputation. Perhaps the easiest epithet for this added quality is "poetic." If one had felt this in the earlier work, here and there, one had forgotten it in the prevailing sense of the real, or (as Henry James preferred to call it) the actual. But in *Death in Venice*, this became the dominant tone; the poetic or allegorical quality was precisely what one most remembered afterward. One remembered a tone, a haze, a vague disquieting tapestry effect, as of the smoke from autumnal burnings of leaves; an atmosphere heavy and charged; a feeling of that kind of poetic counterpoint which was habitual with Poe and Hawthorne. The tale was deep, melancholy, almost (in a sense) horrible. Beauty and horror were met, here, in a kind of balance.

The Magic Mountain moved one's general impression back again toward Buddenbrooks, but not all the way. Is one perhaps right in calling this enormous novel a kind of "secondary" masterpiece? It resembles Buddenbrooks in its leisure, its copiousness, its mas-

sive employment of circumstance. It differs from it in a slight dislocation toward what one might call the spiritual. This again is a three-decker: one of the finest examples of the really "exhaustive" novel which the present generation has given us. But it moves away from *Buddenbrooks* in at least one particular: one feels in it just a trace of an *arrière-pensée*, a mystic or pseudo-mystic current, barely revealed, a preoccupation with ultimates and eternal. Its superlative leisure, like that of Proust's great novel, annihilates time: it is indeed, in a sense, as the prologue makes clear, preoccupied with the sense of time, or of timelessness; and it is also curiously, and perhaps naturally (given this circumstance) preoccupied with death, and with the scale of values peculiar to the man who stands on the brink of death. Here we have a sanatorium full of tuberculosis victims, all of them obsessed with death, all of them charged with that queer recklessness and detachment which supervenes in such cases, where the approach of death is gradual, and all of them subnormal, as regards energy; the characterization is acute, detailed, profound; the hero, and Mynheer Peeperkorn, and Madame Chauchat, are magnificent; and the amount of time, for a patient and cynical review of the world, is unlimited. Except for the slight and intermittent love-story, which comes to no climax, there is no plot: the novel has its excuse first in its richness as a microcosm (which everywhere refers to a macrocosm) and second in its exquisiteness of tone. It is a three-decker with a deep undercurrent of poetry: a kind of William Clissold written by a poet who happens, also, to have a streak of morbidity.

This streak of morbidity comes out most clearly, apparently, if one may safely judge by what has thus far been translated from the German, in the latest of Thomas Mann's books, *Children and Fools*. These are short stories, of which the most recent and best is dated 1926, and the others from twenty to thirty years earlier. In all of them is this queer Gothic something-or-other which one has obscurely felt from the beginning in Mann's work -- most definitely in *Death in Venice*, perhaps, but also, as just noted, in *The Magic Mountain*. Knowing little of contemporary German literature, one hesitates to say that this is a mere Germanness: and nevertheless one is constantly feeling how curiously these tales resemble -- if one may speak wholly of affects -- the German fairy-stories which one read when one was a child. Here again is that blending of beauty and horror: of the mystic with the terrible: of life and the most morbid aspects of death. One feels that Mann is a victim of certain obsessions which he cannot escape. He must torture, and be tortured; he must die, and see death; he must be weak, and submit to the brutal; he must manage the scalpel which dissects an anguish, and manage it with a surgeon's scientific detachment. *Disorder and Early Sorrow* * is one of the most beautiful stories the present reviewer has ever read: the story of a child's first love, and of the father's jealousy; but even in this is the note of Gothic morbidity. And in the earlier and shorter stories, which

are more purely analytical, and less circumstanced -- almost, indeed, clinical statements -- one detects a nearly unintermittent note of morbidity. They all deal with abnormals -- they all deal with psychological disaster. The difference between these and the later stories is simply that the later ones are more poetic, more sublimated. *The Path to the Cemetery*, in the present volume -- a story dated 1901 -- is a bare pathological or psychiatric outline for what might, in 1926, have been another *Death in Venice*.

Eventually, therefor, we begin to see Thomas Mann as a very special and slightly warped figure. But he is a poet, and that is all we need.

*Published in The Dial, October and November, 1926.

THE OXFORD JONSON

Ben Jonson. Volumes I, II, and III. Edited by C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson. To be published in ten volumes. 8vo. The Clarendon Press, Oxford. Volumes I and II, \$14; volume III, \$7.

THE most conscientious reviewer would find it hard to write in anything but praise, when presented with three such sumptuous volumes as these; and should therefore rejoice to find that the scholarship and critical abilities of the editors deserve the elegance of the printing. This is as fine and as final an edition as any Elizabethan dramatist has yet received; if there are any flaws, they are beyond the competence of this reviewer to discover. The arrangement of the book, first, is one to be commended to all editors of voluminous authors, who aim to combine the functions of scholarship, criticism, and biography. Not only the biography and the general critical estimate, but also the introductions to the several plays, are united in the first two volumes; only with Volume III do the texts begin; and with the first three volumes we have the texts of only four plays: *A Tale of a Tub*, *The Case is Altered*, *Every Man in His Humour*, and *Every Man Out of His Humour*. This is the right method, for it offers two advantages. Readers who cannot afford all ten volumes can buy the first two, and have at least the most final and exhaustive account of the life and work of Ben Jonson. And while we await the rest of the work, volume by volume, we have already assembled in Volume II, critical introductions to all the plays and minor work.

It would be impossible to review thoroughly the information

and criticism of these three volumes; one who has already committed himself to a critical estimate of Jonson's plays finds not only much new information, but many critical suggestions to correct or to extend his own. The last chapter of the general introduction, entitled *Final Appreciation*, condenses a sound opinion into nine pages. Against the common view which would isolate Jonson from his contemporaries, and style him "pseudo-classical," we recommend the following passage:

"It is clear that the cleavage between his work and the mass of contemporary production was by no means so deep and wide as his frequent air of aggressive isolation would suggest. To contrast Jonson as a thoroughbred neo-classic with the "romantic" Elizabethans is a very imperfect way of representing his relation to his fellow-dramatists...More than this, a great part of the matter of Jonsonian drama is common ground. Marston and Dekker, Nashe, Middleton, Fletcher, Beaumont, Shakespeare himself, and scores of others, whatever their divergences from him and from one another, are Jonson's fellows and comrades at one point, -- the drastic and humorous representation of the life of Elizabethan England."

And on the reputation of Jonson the authors are equally good:

"It is founded even now less upon enjoyment or admiration than on the unforgettable image which has come down to us of 'Ben,' the most familiarly known to us, beyond comparison, of all the Elizabethans. Jonson, apart from all questions of merit or demerit, is there, a personal force even more than a creative power. . . . Only some nine years younger than Shakespeare, Jonson belongs to an England which had grown older by at least twice as many in that swiftly maturing time."

From the biography, with its notes, letters, and documents, we get an impression of the man essentially the same as that of his tradition, but merely graven deeper. (We repeat with pleasure Jonson's note on his *Catiline*: "there's one scene in that play which I think is flat: I resolve to mix no more water with my wine.") It was through an immensely impressive personality, as much as by the greatness of his work, that Jonson influenced, more than any other one man, the whole course of English literature: it may be asked whether a man of such personality, like Samuel Johnson after him, is not always likely to be read about rather than read. It may be this, as much as the difficulty or asperity of the plays themselves, that has left them to be the reading, and the not very constant reading, of a few privileged admirers.

There is much to be learned by reading the introductions to the several plays straight ahead, as they are here presented, as a consecutive study in criticism. Among the hints which I have got in this way, here is one point which I ought myself to have observed and emphasized years ago. We are apt to think of *Sejanus* and *Catiline* as by-products, as unsuccessful attempts to write tragedy, a mode for which the genius of Jonson was unfitted. But *Catiline* and *Sejanus* are no more tragic, in significance, than *Volpone* is comic. They are variations on exactly the same sensibility as that of the great comedies. Messrs Herford and Simpson bring out very well the capital importance of *Sejanus* in the preparation of Jonson for writing *Volpone* and *The Alchemist* and *The Silent Woman*:

"Closely as *Sejanus* is modelled upon history, none of Jonson's dramas is more Jonsonian in conception and execution. If he alters little in his historical materials, it is partly because history in some important points played as it were into his hands, providing both a kind of action and a prevailing quality of character singularly suited to his genius and to his art. The advance in coherence upon any of the Humour plays, after the first, is enormous; upon *Every Man in His Humour* itself, it is considerable. He was entering in fact upon a new phase of his art. The immense constructive grip soon to be shown in *Volpone* and *The Alchemist* is already approached, as their dramatic situation is anticipated."

The resemblances between *Sejanus* and *Volpone* are particularized, and the criticism of the former closes with this paragraph:

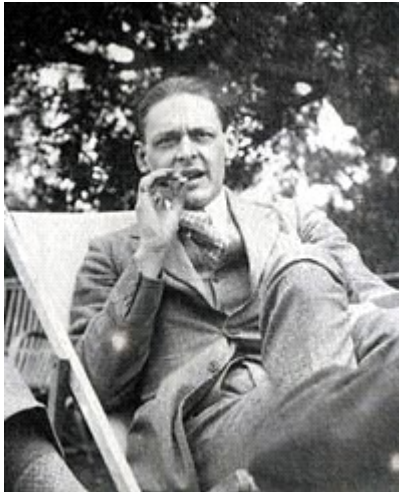
"On the whole, *Sejanus* is the tragedy of a satirist -- of one who felt and saw more intensely the vices and follies than the sorrows of men, and who, with boundless power of scorn, was poorly endowed in pity. He could draw the plotting of bad men, their savage vengeance, their ruinous fall; he could draw the fatuities and mishaps of fools; but the delusions which jangle and overthrow a noble nature lay beyond his sphere. Jonsonian tragedy suffers from an inner poverty in the humanities of the heart, -- analogous to the wilful bareness of style which masks the poetic core of the tragedy of Ibsen. But the imagination is nevertheless impressed by this sombre fabric of verdureless flint and granite, too arid and savage to leave any coign of vantage for sympathy."

This is good criticism, though the analysis could be carried farther. For it does not explain the fact that the satire of Swift, with equal power of scorn, equal perception of folly, stupidity, and evil, moves our feeling as nothing of Jonson's can do. The last

chapter of the *Voyage to the Houyhnhnms* is, in its kind, more terrible satire than anything Jonson ever wrote, yet it can move us to pity and a kind of purgation. We feel everywhere the tragedy of Swift himself, we never feel any tragedy about Jonson. Jonson nevertheless remains for us a great personality, as was Swift; but this personality is largely given through the tradition about the man, and nowhere completely in his work; and Swift on the other hand is wholly a terrific personality in his work. What is the difference? It is not to say that Swift was a greater man, or a greater artist, than Jonson; nor can we say in return that Jonson's was a keener intellect than Swift's. But the work of Swift came out of deeper and intenser emotion.

What is repellent to many readers in the plays of Jonson, or what at least leaves them indifferent, is perhaps this fact that the satire fails of the first intensity, by not seeming to come out of deep personal feeling. By the consistency of the point of view, the varied repetition of the same tone, by artistic constructive skill, Jonson does create the illusion of a world, and works a miracle of great satire without great emotion behind it. But it is not a world in which any one can live for long at a time, though it is one from the study of which every writer can profit.

T. S. Eliot



Eliot, 1923

ETCHED IN MOONLIGHT

Review by Padraic Colum

Etched in Moonlight. By James Stephens. 12mo.

199 pages. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

In *Etched in Moonlight* James Stephens has accomplished the feat, always hazardous for a writer, of passing from one idiom into another. His new book is in a new manner and deals with a new material, and yet it is as vital and personal as any of the books we think of as being distinctively Stephens'. There is nothing of the exuberance of *A Crock of Gold*, or *Deirdre*, or *Irish Fairy Tales*, in the latest volume; it has fantasy, but its fantasy is not now of happening or of character, but of idea. Even the distinctiveness of background has been suppressed in the tales that make *Etched in Moonlight*: the story that gives title to the collection has no particular land for its setting; we may surmise the Irish countryside or Dublin as backgrounds for the other tales, but locality is not stressed at all. The language is no longer highly coloured or quaintly phrased; it is fluent, but it is plain, and where there is abundance the abundance comes from the writer's dwelling with a sort of penetrating reverie upon a scene which has come up before him. What climaxes he leads up to are given in a kind of under-statement. Here, for instance, is a picture of a house where starvation has been:

"Into this place the gentleman called on the following day to investigate, and was introduced to a room swept almost as clean of furniture as a dog-kennel is; to the staring, wise-eyed child who lived in a chair; and to the quiet morsel of death that lay in a cot by the wall."

What James Stephens gives us in this book are moralities -- that is to say, they are judgements of certain aspects of human nature formed by a man who is seeking for some wise way of living. His material and his method are not new discoveries of his: they are developments of a vein that was in previous works -- the vein that is in the *Philosopher* of *A Crock of Gold* and *Here Are Ladies*, *The Philosopher* in these books was whimsical, spontaneous, and untaught. His creator has become reflective; he has become capable of giving us these penetrating moralities.

As in a morality all the interests, all the relations in these stories are simplified. One story is a narrative of a dream. In another story, the poignancy of a parting comes to us through a woman's dream of a journey to the Arctic: she wakes to find her husband dead beside her. This is the unforgettable story, *Desire*, which was originally published in *The Dial*.^{*} What James Stephens is probably trying to do in this collection is not to give us a human passion as it is reacted upon and related to the feelings of other individuals, but as it is in itself, as it is isolated. He gives us the

baffled desperateness of the starving; he gives us the hushed excitement that comes to a man who is given a glimpse of his life's boundaries and of some prospect beyond; he gives us the queer ruffianliness that might come over us as we heard for the hundredth time the whine of a pesterer; he gives us the sudden hatred that can take possession of a man as a demon might, suppressing the whole of a self that he knew. From these bare and simplified experiences a full, an exciting life rises up, making red-blooded romances and heavily documented accounts of people's lives empty and tame. The incidents which James Stephens records are concerned only with what is constant in human nature, and so the people in whose lives they happen have little of what we call character: I do not recall that any of them have names. Anything that has happened to any one of them might have happened to all of them, although there are those in the stories who are great lords and ladies and those who are lowly, those who have security and those who perish of hunger. And the scene upon which the people look is generalized also -- the localities in the book one remembers are the moonlit plain on which the ancient castle stands and the white arctic country -- both scenes in a dream. The writer of these stories seems to have turned away from the diversity of the world and to have thought only upon what tragic and ludicrous motions the human soul in its loneliness makes. And the language in which he writes of these things seems to be so spontaneous that it might be just speech written down. *Etched in Moonlight* is like the beginning of literature -- a beginning with simple and fundamental situations, with actual speech, with a gravity of outlook. But Mr Stephens has not let go of the humour that is always his. One of the nameless men in his stories is given us in this way:

"His ears swung slightly outwards. The ends of his trousers flopped about his ankles, and from the flop and waggle of these garments one knew that his legs were as skinny as matches. One divined that his elbows were sharp enough to wear a hole through his coat, and that his feet were longish and flattish and that his toes mounted energetically on top of each other."

BRIEFER MENTION

Fireflies, by Rabindranath Tagore, decorations by Boris Artzybasheff (12mo, 274 pages; Macmillan: \$2.50). These delicate moth-wings of elusive wisdom carry a good deal more of the peculiar spiritual urbanity and serene detachment of their author than his longer and more pretentious poems. Limpid as water-colour vignettes, they are characteristically East Indian in tone. Lacking the dramatic intensity of Blake's mystical aphor-

isms ; lacking too the wistful humour of Chinese poetry ; they convey to the mind a tender resignation, soft and insidious, like a diffused perfume, suspected rather than poignantly inhaled.

Plays of Negro Life, selected and edited by Alain Locke and Montgomery Gregory (8vo, 430 pages; Harpers: \$5) embraces the outstanding dramas of negro material which have been brought forth in the last dozen years. There are twenty titles, of which Eugene O'Neill contributes two, and Ridgely Torrence and Paul Green three each. Such a collection may well dispel any remaining public doubts as to the authentic and vital character of a dramatic movement already rich in achievement, and giving every indication of a sustained and natural growth. What is true of the domain of drama is equally striking in the realm of poetry, as one quickly discovers in turning the pages of *Caroling Dusk, An Anthology of Verse by Negro Poets*, edited by Countee Cullen (8vo, 237 pages; Harpers: \$2.50). Mr Cullen has ballasted his selection with representative verse from such outstanding figures as Paul Laurence Dunbar, James Weldon Johnson, and W. E. Burghardt du Bois, but with equal pride he gives place to an array of younger singers -- a buoyant and sensitive throng. By no means the least interesting detail of the anthology is the autobiographical note which accompanies each name.

THE THEATRE

GILBERT SELDES

"WITH the production of such freshman jink," writes George Jean Nathan, "the Provincetown Playhouse loses all critical respect."

The reference is to *Him*, by E. E. Cummings.

Shortly after this play was produced the Provincetown Playhouse asked me to write an introduction to a pamphlet in which the opinions of the dramatic critics were contrasted with those of the book reviewers who had discussed the play when it was published. The pamphlet raised a row and consequently I may be prejudiced about the whole matter. It still seems to me that the critical reception of *Him* is at least as interesting as the play itself, and since I have been accused of "being crazy about" the play, I would like to issue a démenti. I am not crazy about *Him* and I am a little crazy about Aristotle.

For the one thing which after many years remains with me is the Aristotelian practice of keeping one's eye on the object, of criticizing the thing criticized and not the grandfather of the artist nor his

taste in haberdashery nor his private opinions nor his previous efforts. And what I had to say about the New York dramatic critics was simply that they allowed themselves to be diverted from the play set before them and that in reporting on it, reviewing and criticizing it, they did not clearly indicate what the play was. They said it was mad and sophomoric and dirty; they put adjectives to it -- not nouns or verbs; they quoted an inept programme note, and talked about Mr Cummings' typography, his poetry, his prose. But they gave no clue to the perfectly apparent character and nature of the play itself.

Here, for instance, is all -- absolutely all -- that Mr Nathan says on the subject:

"For utter guff, this Cummings exhibition has never been surpassed within the memory of the oldest play-reviewer operating in Manhattan. It is incoherent, illiterate, preposterous balderdash, as completely and unremittingly idiotic as the human mind, when partly sober, can imagine. The author may be identified as a young man without any thus far revealed talent of any sort who has sought to attract attention to himself by composing verse rid of all sense, rhyme and punctuation, by declining to use capital letters and printing his name in lower case, and by confecting a war novel the big kick of which consisted in the use of a word hitherto more intimately associated with the lavatory than with literature. Professing to detect genius in these obvious monkey-shines, one or two dubious commentators have spilled some ink in celebration of Cummings' gifts, but all that the majority of critics and laymen have been able to detect in him has been a sub-Ger. trude Stein in pants, a ridiculous adolescent in revolt against literary tradition with a hair-pin.

"The affair called 'Him' is introduced by the author with the following note: 'Don't try to despise it, let it try to despise you. Don't try to enjoy it, let it try to enjoy you. Don't try to understand it, let it try to understand you.' That'll give you a faint idea of what to expect. If you need a further hint, I may report that the characters include and are named the Missing Link, Six Hundred Pounds of Passionate Pulchritude, the King of Borneo, Second Shape, Mussolini, First Centurion, Fourth Fairy, A Blonde Gonzesse, Nine Foot Giant, First Drunk, Virgo and Third Weird, and that among the twenty-one scenes we find listed 'old howard's conception of roman villa,' 'le père tranquille' and 'semicircular piece of depth.' "

The opinion of the Provincetown Playhouse, quoted above, follows. ,

Analyse this report, or criticism, of a play. Six lines calling it

names, precisely in the rhythm of Ghosts and Gibberings; sixteen lines about the author in totally unrelated matters, and these sixteen full of inaccuracies (the "big kick" in The Enormous Room was the author's style, the critics who praise Cummings are neither "one or two" nor "dubious" in standing; the connexion is not with Gertrude Stein, so much as with Joyce) and ending with an appeal to the opinion of the majority which Mr Nathan has specifically ruled out as almost always wrong. There follow four lines quoted from the programme and ten lines about the names of the characters and scenes, in which Mr Nathan is not even fair enough to note that many of the characters he names are in a circus scene, others in a burlesque, and that the Old Howard is a famous burlesque house in Boston.

I begin -- after all these years of admiring Mr Nathan's writing about the theatre -- to wonder whether respect is exactly the critical quality it is in his power to give or withhold. '

I have quoted all of Mr Nathan's review because it is typical of the whole body of criticism which met Cummings' play. (Mr John Anderson of The New York Journal was the outstanding exception -- he actually told what the play was, and I have heard that there was an interesting review, which did the same, in The Wall Street Journal. I am speaking now of the critics of the daily papers only.) And my point is that even if the play had been utterly worthless, it would still have been the reviewer's duty to define and characterize it -- literally, give its essential character -- before, or instead of, going on to other things.

The newspaper critic has two specific obligations: to the producer of a play he has to be fair; to the public, he has to be illuminating. There is little room left for the exhibition of personality or prejudice. The critic has to know what the playwright was trying to do and to assay his success; and he has to tell his readers these things and indicate to them whether they would be likely to care for the play. I think that in telling their readers -- the vast majority -- that they would not like *Him*, the critics were right; they would have failed in their duty if they had sent the whole patronage of the *Forties* and *The Green Hat* and *Strange Interlude* to see *Him*. But they failed utterly to inform the minority what *Him* was.

The play opens with a woman being placed under an anaesthetic. After a thousand dream-plays it might be easily guessed that the rest of the play goes on in the mind of the woman and is therefore in a sense the record of delirium. The reappearance of the doctor in scene after scene is a further clue and there are various indications that the symbols are being used in accordance with some of the mysteries of psychoanalysis. Setting this aside, as I did when I saw the play because I did not feel the need of that ex-

planation, the nature of *Him* still remains perfectly clear. "It is a tragic fantasy . . . the author states his theme and reiterates it throughout the play. The conflict is announced at the very beginning, when the girl says, "Why should we pretend to love each other? and the man says that his life is based on three things -- that he is a man, an artist, and a failure."

That the unconscious burlesques our conscious life is a commonplace and in *Him*, Cummings has specifically not tried to stand a commonplace on its head in order to make it appear novel. He has used it in all simplicity, creating a fantasia in the terms of burlesque, technically even of the burlesque show. It is an eminently suitable technique; for the looseness, the mad logic, the swift changes, the sudden re-entrances of early jokes, themes, or characters, in burlesque shows exactly correspond to features of the subconscious life.

The difficulty for the audience was that fantasy, in general, is either wholly comic or satiric. There were both high and low comedy in *Him*, but the tragic tension was a disturbing element and Cummings either from wilfulness or lack of skill at times made the mystery more obscure. I say "wilfulness" but, although I know the author and his work fairly well, I am not trying to rival the critics in imputing motives. I mean simply that he may have felt so strongly that certain scenes must be as he conceived them, that he allowed them to stand in the face of the certainty that they would puzzle the majority of his auditors. That he ever mystified the audience purely for the satisfaction of doing so, I venture not to believe.

To me the finest scenes were those which seem to take place outside the dream -- scenes between the man and the woman, of rare lyric intensity and beauty. Love between men and women on the stage has become so much a matter of convention that actual passion, actual exaltation appear strange and terrifying. They exist in *Him* -- in the long baffling speeches of the man, in the brief sentences and gestures of the woman. The lyricism of Cummings' prose is identical with that of his poetry, and on the stage it is a rare phenomenon.

The Provincetown Playhouse completely fulfilled its function in the production of *Him*. Its function is not to hold the critical respect of anybody except those interested in experimentation in the theatre. The physical, intellectual, and financial endowments of the Playhouse dedicate it to small audiences who believe passionately in the value of the creative artist. To give such an artist an opportunity to see his work in action, is one of the things the Provincetown can do; it did it for Eugene O'Neill and it has done it, with courage and a gaiety matching the gaiety of Cummings' own manner, in *Him*. The play was terribly hard to do

and Mr James Light did it well. Certain scenes seemed to me appallingly dull, but I do not see how they could have been made lighter; the significant scenes were all in the tone and style set by the text. The three chief players -- Lawrence Bolton, William S. Johnstone, and Erin O'Brien-Moore (the Doctor, Him, and Me) -- were perfectly in command of the meaning of the play and of their parts; the massing and manoeuvring of the large cast was done with ease and skill; and the whole play was exciting and depressing, fascinating and dull, but always itself, an integral creation.

The attack on Cummings has been so vicious that I would like to omit my reservations. In all fairness, they are serious. The unity of his play is threatened by the shift of manner between the fantastic scenes and the scenes between the lovers. Threatened, but not ruined because in every case (but one) the scenes in the room follow the picture-scene of the operating-table and so establish a connexion. And, a more serious defect, it seems to me that at times the material has escaped from the author's hand, that it has rolled away and collected barnacles and that these have been incorporated into the texture of the play. The intrusions, the excessive lengths, are to me no proof of an overpowering individuality -- the proof of that comes in the careful construction, in the disciplined use of the material elsewhere. I suspect that with other symbols and some refinement of technique, Him might have been more effective -- and certainly less tiring. It was tiring -- it ran full three hours. But when it was over, one felt that that kind of weariness gave an enormous satisfaction.

MODERN ART

Henry McBride

WERE we, as a community, deeply engrossed in the study of art -- which we are not, alas! -- the two exhibitions in the season just ending which would have aroused the greatest interest were those of De Chirico and Picabia. Both of these men seemed to be edging easily and naturally forward into something new and neither had that air of wishing to be new which is usually fatal to spontaneity. Spontaneity, in fact, was their new quality. We have had a Matisse exhibition, and a De Segonzac and a Derain, and all these artists seem to be painting now better than ever before but all of them give the effect of being fixed planets in the sky rather than comets. A planet is something you can pin your faith to more safely than to a comet but just the same something very exhilarating happens when a new star swims into your ken and most people willingly rush to their doors to inspect the phenomenon and thoroughly enjoy talking it over afterward. Picabia's exhibition certainly had a flashing effect that would have brought

people to their doorways -- were we as a people deeply concerned in questions of art -- but, that not being so, it was only the astronomers who got the thrill. They, however, got plenty.

As in De Chirico's case, it was the fact that Picabia is now painting, that gave most satisfaction. Picabia used to show here often enough but what he showed were not always certainly pictures. I forget where he comes from -- he may be an Argentine, a Spaniard, or a Cuban -- but my impression is that he gained a New York reputation as a radical before going to Paris to join in the nihilistic proceedings of the Dadaists. He was not so much interested in construction as destruction. He loved to fling explosives beneath the carriage-wheels of the smug and commonplace. He was certainly of the "bad-boy" type and when he got to Paris he outraged the freedoms even of the city of light. I vaguely recall the scandal of a title he attached to one of his "oeuvres" and which, with some assistance from the police, he afterwards changed. Paris loves its "bad boys" and even the city magistrates are never severe upon them, but just the same, Picabia seemed destined for the rôle of "whip" on the side-lines of art rather than that of a central figure. He distinctly had a genius for attracting attention but lacked that other part of genius -- the capacity for holding it.

The recent exhibition implies just the opposite. The half dozen best, and very good, paintings are perhaps not enough to found a lasting name, but the individual who did them is by no means decrepit and the chances are that he could do more if urged. His themes were light and the manner light. He hasn't the horsepower of Picasso. But his mind plays naturally in the modern idioms and there are no check-reins on his fancy. It was the feeling of being untrammelled and knowing perfectly what it was all about that gave the present pictures charm. They had the ease of the sonnets that poor Guillaume Apollinaire used to dash off on a café table at the hour of the apéritif to the applause of his friends. They could not have been done except by someone so certain of applause that he was no longer influenced by applause, and as there is no place in the world save Paris where abstract art gets an instant "hand," it followed that these pictures brought us the most distinct whiff of that fair city that we have lately had. I thought there was something elegant in their completion and finish. I thought that an individual of taste who relishes daring and invention and who has no special objection to being slightly in advance of his friends could take genuine pride in possessing them. Some such persons of taste there were, for certain of the canvases sold. My favourite, though, the one called *Les Chiens* which had agreeably composed lines that could be definitely doggy to those who insist on a measure of fact, did not find a purchaser. But I blame myself for this. There were one or two persons still in town to whom I might have telephoned but I didn't -- through

sheer laziness.

Speaking of sales reminds me that one or two of the artists who are frequently mentioned in The Dial achieved financial successes, as well as the other kind, this winter. In addition to Mr Kuniyoshi, Mr Andrew Dasburg, Mr Charles Burchfield, Mr Miguel Covarrubias, Mr Marin, and Miss O'Keefe did extremely well for themselves. Those who profess to understand the mysterious workings of the business side of the art game, attribute the furore in the Rehn Gallery over Mr Dasburg's recent output, entirely to the fact that he won one of the prizes at this year's Pittsburgh International. This may be the true explanation. If so, it is odd enough. ... Mr Burchfield's success has long since been earned but just for that reason it was also a surprise. Cash receipts and merit are not necessarily consonant...Miss O'Keefe, however, made the profoundest impression of all upon the brokers, A set of small paintings of calla-"lilies" -- six, I think -- sold to an as yet unnamed connoisseur for twenty-five thousand dollars, This was thought to be some kind of a record. It certainly was, at least, for her. Furthermore, it was announced, these paintings were to go romantically to France where the owner was building a house one room of which was to be consecrated to the "lilies." This event made the hangers-on of the studios gasp but no one has yet ventured to sermonize about it. I, too, at this fagged end of the season, feel unequal to enlarging upon such a subject. . Before laying aside my pen, however, there is one other development of the winter that I must mention, and it, too, is not unconnected with business. I refer to the serious sponsorship of modern decorative art by the great department stores. These institutions do as much educating as the colleges and are vastly more flexible and open-minded in their methods. Lord and Taylor's, Macy's, and Wanamaker's have been swift upon the heels of the great decorative art exposition of Paris and this winter have managed to place the "modern note" squarely before the New York public. This public, astonishingly enough, is submissive. So much so that people have already begun to blush at the mention of Louis Quinze and Louis Seize and with characteristic American impetuosity have determined to achieve, if not a native background, at least one that is visibly in this period.

AUGUST

PHOENIX
BY PHILIPPA POWYS

GLORIOUS was the morning along the western shore.

Bright grew the buttercups amid the early grass. Rich and red stretched the cliffs on either side. Blue lay the sea below; while bluer still rose the high vault of heaven above.

Who could forget? My soul forbid it. What had come over me this early summer morning? An awe beyond understanding, a rapture more stirring than sunshine! All remembrances became as naught! Here was the birth of a great joy. It rose with the salted smell of lain seaweed; it brought the music of slow breaking waves. It lingered in the curved lines of the boats, it played with the light of the sun on the water. It gathered with the waves, and it rose with the wings of many sea-birds. I stood and I trembled.

What was the meaning of the joy of my soul? My mind was perplexed beyond understanding. Why was I conscious of a strange wonder, a nervous excitement; while within me arose an exalted happiness?

At the same time my father stood black-coated beside me. He was tall. He looked straight before him, gazing at the sky and at the far horizon. Very still we stood. Presently in a solemn voice he exclaimed: "Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

I caught the echo of his word to my soul, for at that instant far below us I saw the moving figure of my lover.

There where the heat struck the round stones of the beach, there where the fishermen mended their nets, he appeared. There where the birds clamoured and whirled for offal, he came. It was as if he walked not. It seemed that his feet touched not the ground. There as he lingered between the boats and the sea, the sky grew still brighter, the waves played faster, and the gulls mewed and soared above him. The very elements knew that one blessed had come among them.

My father glanced below, and he spoke and he questioned: "Who goes there? A fisherman?"

I made no reply, but in silence my heart shivered. I could only watch. I saw then the beams of the sun strike the sides of boats with a still stronger light; and with fearful strength it bore down on the ripples of the waves, on the steepness of the cliffs, and on the houses which crowded the valley. Glorified by the blue of sea, it fell over him as he handled the nets with the others upon the shore.

My heart was stirred within me, and I made as if I would go down to him, but lo! the arm of my father out-stretched before me. He stayed me. Then did I feel the rim of tears behind the clear sight of my eyes, even as blackening clouds of thunder approached unnoticed behind the inland hills. Perceiving them my father pointed again, and his long black arm looked more menacing than the gathering storm.

"The Lord have mercy upon us."

Forthwith as he turned aside, a flash with sharp intensity revealed the massed purple of the vapour; while across the grassy inclines came the muttered sound of thunder.

I looked below where the sun still shone upon the shore. Yes, the powerful rays of the solar world were yet aslant upon the boats and upon the fishermen. In the pure nimbus of heaven they were made manifest. My soul rejoiced exceedingly, for where the sea-waves fell, sang the joy of days to come.

Bright evening light; peace and rest.
Borne away in a fishing boat.

Rise and fall; gurgle and ripple.

Hear the sea break against the sides
Rolling fast in from the ocean-fields.

My head on the ballast, I see him watch,
Keenly alive to the lights abeam,

Or trailing the line, he anxiously waits.

Drift and float. Haul hard and pull.

Hands on the long paddle, or pumping at stern.
Heave the net to, and unmesh the fish.

The waters all silver with flickering tails.

I dreamed a dream one night; most terrible; so vivid, so real, that it came before me as a vision.

Thus it happened in the midst of my fearful imagination that day-time was turning to later noon and I was clinging to a lonely rock, surrounded by deep waters and torn by great waves. Fast they rose above me, covering me with foaming showers. Like the

hissing froth from a monster's mouth they reared to drench me. Cold and cruel they fell upon me. Mightily afraid, I held in terror to the structure of the rocks, so jagged and yet so smooth. The palms of my hands were bleeding, they were more sticky from my own blood than from the saltiness of the spray which overspread me. My feet slipped upon the moist weed as they strove in vain to escape the swirling force of the riven sea.

Many clouds over and around me filled the sky; dark and ferocious, racing clouds, wolf-like...They gathered around knowing no mercy, for no mercy they knew. Their wild gusty breath came in panting fury from their bellies, confounding the countenance of the sun until it turned from fire to milk-white, pale as a mid-day moon. When from its sides came forth long arrows of anger, spurring the water to further wrath, hastening the winds to jealousy until they thundered forth in chaos and madness; bringing in their rear the great rains, which fell in sheets upon the billows and upon the sharp sides of the rocks.

Tremendous and terrible was the tumult from which I shrank. Shattered and broken was my soul within me.

All, all was evil; all, all was bent on destruction. What merciless flood-gates had broken? From whom could I receive salvation? To whom could I turn to be saved?

Only to the rock could I cling. Only in the tempest could I lift up my voice. In great trouble I cried aloud, but my call was as that of a piping bird, as that of a grasshopper in rustling corn. There was no one to succour me, no light to give me hope; and no miracle to bring peace to the sea.

But in violence did the waves rise in rapid approach; while colder than ice froze the beams of the departing sun. A darkness worse than night pressed its mad hands towards me; barrenness and death surrounded me.

What was the meaning of this wild desolation? Where was my call in the churning waste of water, in this wind-driven sky?

Of a sudden there came as if a voice from the mass of flying clouds . . . "Let go thy hands, who aught can save thee?" While I raised one, a great ship neared. She heaved towards me through the eternal rush of waters; with sides blacker than the vapours above, she tossed. I sounded my voice, but there came no answer, Two arms reared upwards, only to be lost with the ship in the troughs and hills of tormented creation.

Thus was I forsaken! Thus had God forgotten me!

Bleeding fast was the blood of my hands, and drenched was the hair of my head; the strength of my legs was even as that of a new born calf.

Who could survive? Who could rally? Better to be thrown among lions; to be hurled from a high steeple; where forgetfulness would be established in death, and peace in unconsciousness.

How long, how much longer before the waves would envelope me, and the howling winds possess me?

To my soul there came no comfort.

Listen! What did I hear beyond the shriek of the wind? What did I hear beyond the pounding of the mighty waves? The voice of the man I loved, or the voice of his mate who lived with him! Only in fancy could it pass with the flying foam, with the long cords of the whipping rain.

No! To my astonishment I heard the call again. How had they seen? How had they heard?

Upon a raging sea they launched off their boat. By the fire of lightning they directed her. Upon the sides of the great waves they steered toward me; in the jeopardy of the gale they held their lives. Only to save me by the whirling of a rope, by the swiftness of an arm to deliver me. Thence I was assured from the ravages of a storm, and from the onslaught of the tempest I was gathered.

In the tossing fleeting craft I at last found safety; in a fishing-boat of wood and tar I regained my soul.

No longer will the roaring winds alarm me,
No longer will the strong waves rear over me.
Though soot-black clouds surround me

And beating hail-stones fall across me,

I trouble not:

I trouble not, .
For on a bed of nets I lay me down,

Among pearl-like fish I find repose.

To forget terror in the sound of the rowlock,
To find sleep in the fall of the oars.

He brought his arm forth to protect me,
His wisdom found me out.

A GARDEN

BY GEORGE WHITSETT

The frozen camellias upon their litter of glamorous pain;
The fronded aurora, gossamer, dampened with rain;
The timorous lips of the river, whimpering among
the leaves;
The gorge, palsied and austere;
The wounded palm that grieves.

The step that is mocked and forsaken ;
The hand that is covered with shadow;
The lintel that a wind has shaken.

THE SEAL

BY L. A. G. STRONG

JUST before six the rain lifted, and Rosamond started of to the shore by herself. George had been loud in his outbursts at its continuance, and after tea had sat down to write some letters. There had been all day in which to write them, but he would not begin; he kept pacing up and down the little farmhouse sitting-room and watching the sky. Now, characteristically, he would not come out till they were finished. He liked company when swimming, so Rosamond was going down to the shore to wait for him, in case he got the letters done in time.

She crossed the road, climbed a low fence, every wire bright with raindrops, and went slowly along the path through the broom. Now and then she brushed against a branch which sent off a delightful shower. A rabbit, hopping up the bank in front of her, left a little track like smoke on the silver grass. Even the burn below her, running dark and passionately full, made hardly a sound.

After the room at the farm, which on a wet day was dank and stuffy and on any day too small to hold a large fretful man, Rosa-

mond's sense of escape was complete. She would have liked a walk in the rain by herself, along the rocks, and up by the headland; but George wanted her company when he went out, and if the weather had cleared while she was gone, he would have spent the evening trying not to have a grievance: a generous effort, so patent, and so unsuccessful that she could not steady herself even by concentrating on its fairmindedness. She was glad now that she had not come out before.

There was a sound across the burn. Old Mrs McLean had flung open her door, to feed the chickens. Rosamond waved, but could not be sure that the old lady saw. her.

It was Rosamond's country and everything had always been the same. Mrs McLean's door had always made the same noise, and when she called her dog home in the evening it was always with the same call, for each dog had the same name, although this was the third Darach Rosamond had known.

Last summer, on their honeymoon, she and George had only been able to manage a bare ten days, but George had sworn the joss should be made good, and had dedicated the whole of the next holiday to the farm. That was one of the nicest things about George; he did want one to be happy. Still, he enjoyed the place too, tremendously, so that Rosamond need not reproach herself.

The broom stopped short, and she came out upon the sand. Flowers grew upon it until the final slope of the sand-hills, where only the reeds could live. Beyond was the beach. The thick carpeting of moss felt delightful, quite different to her bare feet, from the grass.

Since she had married, the place seemed somehow changed. Its immediate beauties were obvious, but there had always been a great deal more for her than the lights and colours which called forth George's "By Joves" and "I say, Rosamonds." George's personality was so loud -- well, so vigorous -- that one often needed a good while alone to let his echoes die away. It was lovely to have him interested in what one did, and he took a real, intelligent interest: yet the result was rather like his trick of taking up and continuing, in a hearty baritone, the tune she was humming quietly to herself as she did the housework.

Almost imperceptibly, the rain started again. She reached the sand-hills, turned to her right, and went through the gap beside the burn. She loved the sudden sight of the Islands one had this way, and, even though she remembered that to-day they would probably be invisible, she did not like breaking the pure face of the sand-hills with great sliding foot-marks.

The smaller Islands were lost, but a dark strip of Skye showed beneath a layer of woolly cloud. The sea was flat, and pale as a sheet. There was not even a bird on the beach: and the only sound was the indefinable whisper of soft rain upon sand.

She went very slowly down to the sea's edge, scooped a dry place -- it was surprising how soon, even after a day's rain, one reached dry sand -- and sat down, spreading her mackintosh about her like a tent. The rain was quickening: it began to patter audibly on the mackintosh, to collect in little gleaming rivulets, and run down jerkily into the sand. All was still and intimate. She looked slowly about her, and then down again at the rivulets.

Some instinct made her look at the sea. At first there was nothing, and then a dark object broke the surface. It looked like the float for a lobster-pot: then it moved, and she saw that it was a seal. It was looking at her. She did not stir.

For a moment the head moved indecisively. Doubtless the seal could not make her out. Then, with a snort which carried perfectly over the still water, it dived again.

"Oh," breathed Rosamond, heart-broken, "don't go away"; it seemed that her own country was rejecting, her, if the seal could not trust her. She scanned the surface in an agony, and saw at last an unmistakable dark shadow, clear over the white sand: and there he was again, with a sort of oiled suddenness, away to the right, but definitely nearer, staring at her. Without moving, Rosamond began to whistle, in low, clear, liquid notes, like the rain. The dark head became motionless. He was listening. Then she put into the notes her very soul, her childhood, all that meant happiness: she was calling to her own country, in one of the Island tunes she loved. Her soul and breath were one, and even in the uttermost of her appeal she had a sense of ecstasy, as of an artist consummating his vision alone, with none to praise him.

Then, slowly and softly, the big seal swam towards her, his dark head sleek on the water, his wondering eyes fixed upon her. Tears started to Rosamond's eyes.

"Oh," she breathed. "Bless you. You darling."

When he was quite near, she began to sing, in a low voice, the Seal Croon, and the Sea-gull of the Land under Waves, and all the time the great nursery creature stared at her with soft eyes, in attention and vague delight. When she stopped, he blew, and made a commotion in the water.

She began again, but something had alarmed him; and even

as she realized this, she heard a hearty voice behind her, and George came charging headlong over the sand-hills, bringing down avalanches with each leap.

"Dr-ink to me o-o-nly -- "

The seal gave him a long look, then it looked at Rosamond, and was gone, silently, a black shadow, detached from land and sea.

"By Jove," bellowed George excitedly, "there goes a seal -- look, Rosamond -- see him? -- There he goes -- there! -- By Jove, a whopper !"

He plunged up panting to where she sat.

"I'd no idea they came in so close," he cried. "Did you see him?"

"Yes," said Rosamond.

MATTER AND THE JOYOUS ART

Book Review by H. M. KALLEN

Philosophy. By Bertrand Russell. 8vo. 307 pages. W. W. Norton and Company. \$3.

The Analysis of Matter. By Bertrand Russell. 8vo. 408 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$6.

HISTORICALLY, materialists are a sad race. It is true that Democritus their forefather was called The Laughing Philosopher, but his laughter, I am pretty sure, came through the other side of his mouth. It was not from the joy of life he laughed. Resigned to Necessity and Death, he savoured a dour satisfaction from feeling superior to those who fancied themselves free and immortal. He laughed at them that he might not weep for himself. The classic Epicureans who followed him were moved in the same ways. They feasted out of no joy in the feast, but out of the fear of death. Their pleasures were not a yea-saying to life, but an anaesthetic against the terror lest they lose it. That which they affirmed, when they affirmed anything, was quietist, ascetic, and withdrawn: vision without hope, pity without endeavour ; regretful acquiescence in the inevitable fate which natural law imposed and true reason revealed. And ever since, Materialists

have either been sad and sensual like Omar Khayyam or pitiful and puritan like George Santayana. Matter by itself they might have happily enjoyed; but the laws of matter, their inexorable compulsion, their fatality never-to-be estopped, the weakness and helplessness of man before their power, these were reminders of death which set up and kept up the prevailing materialist mood. Time was when also Bertrand Russell walked among the prophets mourning human fate before the ark of natural law. Then he glorified the liberty which a man could win by insight into the ineluctable bondage. He wrote of such a free man's worship, regretted death, and made a consolation against the weakness and alieny of our spirit in the world of nature by a philosophy which commended acknowledgement, understanding, and resignation.

But that time was before Einstein had traced the geodesic of a new heaven and Bohr had laid out the electronic ground-plans of a new earth. Since these re-creations, impenetrable matter has become dissolvable into something more like mind; imponderable mind has become condensed into something more like matter; law has ceased to be so inexorable and determinism so determinate. The perspectives of mind have entered into the constitution of matter; the causality of matter has become a point of reference for mind. Man and nature are seen to be more akin than was formerly thought. Idealism has gained new arguments furnished by physics, though because physics furnishes them Idealism can hardly be truer than Materialism. Rather do both point to a tertium quid which is the neutral stuff whence matter and mind both emerge. This neutral stuff consists of "events." Matter is a series or process of such events in Einsteinian time-and-space. Mind is another series of such events culminating inside our heads. The laws of mind are as atomic as the laws of matter, but the forms of matter are there defined by physics, and the forms of mind are there revealed, ultimately, by introspection; they involve especially memory and images, the subjectivity of individual perspectives. For this reason the Behaviorist account of mind, although it is to be used to the limit, cannot be an ultimately correct one. Mind and matter meet and overlap in perceptions. These we take twice over; once as events in our experiences, again as events in the external world in which the laws of physics verify themselves or fail to. In them are the ultimate data of our knowledge, neither mental nor material, neither true nor false, but organizable into matter or mind and by their uses, verities or errors.

This, I think, is the novel phase of Mr Russell's current teaching. Some of it he has said before, but he says it here with a new emphasis and new significance. To no small degree moreover, Philosophy is a plain man's summary of the specialist's account of matter in *The Analysis*. To a still greater degree it is Mr Russell's own latest summing-up and present arrangement of things

he has said elsewhere more fully and technically. That there also should be much that is novel and debatable goes, of course, without saying: Russell is among those rare philosophers who rethink, rather than repeat, and who are not afraid to change their minds and say so. If there were space, there are several propositions I should like to argue with him: especially the one that the mind is inside the head, and his notion of a static "truth." Even if we could come to no agreement on these subjects, I should be inclined to welcome him among the pragmatists. If he has not arrived, he is on the threshold. But that he can pass it I am not sure.

The obstruction lies, I think, in his subversive logical skill rather than in any radical differences of perception and insight. I have already called attention, in *THE DIT*,¹ to a certain incommensurability between the cubistic angular architecture and transparency of Russell's style and the confusion and opacity of the world it applies to. To those actually working in matter or operating with mind, the clear order of *The Analysis* must have the thinness of a dream; the structure of the Philosophy, the pattern of a picture in a frame. It may be, indeed, that Mr Russell is himself convinced that the world must be prevaiingly a clear order behind the dark confusion, for he suggests that we know so much physics and so little anything else because the structure of language is an adequate sample of the structure of time-and-space. Hence, even when he is acknowledging the reality of change, or recognizing the fringe of vagueness that attends the clearest thing, he gives an impression of something unchanging, static, and finished, as more important. Old habits of language and logic seem sharper than new convictions about nature and man; words and symbols stand each outside the other in unyielding arabesques of thought designed to name and point to a world all sequences of "events" that compenetrates and overlap. The happier order of the language can hardly fail to infect the troublesome movement of the vision that occasions it.

But the general effect of this vision on the temper and tone of our philosopher has a savour no reader should miss. Philosophy is a gay book, given its theme. In it the author is not only at ease, but at play. It neither exhorts nor denounces nor warns; it enlightens. With natural law and scientific determinism still at the heart of its vision, it comes, not as a catechism of consolations, but as an adventure toward the good life.

"The world presented for our belief by a philosophy based upon modern science," Mr Russell concludes, "is in many ways less alien to ourselves than the world of matter as conceived in former centuries. The events that happen in our minds are parts of the course of nature, and we do not know that the events which happen elsewhere are of a totally different kind. The physical world, so

far as science can show at present, is perhaps less rigidly determined by causal laws than it was thought to be; one might, more or less fancifully, attribute even to the atom a kind of limited free will. There is no need to think of ourselves as powerless and small in the grip of vast cosmic forces...No doubt there are limits to our power . . . but we cannot say what the limits are except in a quite abstract way, such as that we cannot create energy...What is important is to be able to direct energy into this or that channel, and this we can do more and more as our knowledge of science increases...History, science, and philosophy all make us aware of the great collective achievements of mankind...Philosophy should make known to us the ends of life, and the elements in life that have value on their own account. However our freedom may be limited in the causal sphere, we need admit no limitation to our freedom in the sphere of values: what we judge good on its own account, we may continue to judge good, without regard to anything but our own feeling...Love, beauty, knowledge, and joy of life: these things retain their lustre however wide our purview. . . ."

The knowledge of matter which is science, then, sets us free for the affirmations of life. Materialism, which had begun in a realization of human helplessness and a contemplation of death is herein transformed into a realization of power and a vision of freedom and excellence. The philosophy of matter becomes the practice of a joyous art.

* *Logical Form and Social Salvation*, The Dial, December 1927.

MEDIAEVAL

BY OLIVER LA FARGE 2nd

WE left San Juan Bautista, mosquitoes, cafés, dysentery, late in the afternoon. The hot day dissolved into soft evening, full of gracious coolness and the scent of green things. We were strung out between the trees in single file. Night silhouettes never seem clear-cut in the tropics but velvety at the edges. The stars themselves are bigger, less definite, and faintly golden. I caught up with the pack mules and whistled them into life. They disappeared again before me. Where roads forked, our head man would wait, a cigarette gleaming and fading, someone half seen on a moving horse ahead of the pack train, e~lling in Spanish, "This way." It was so nearly dark that when I pulled hard at my cigarette, for a few seconds afterwards I could not see the trees.

At the Rio Colorado we woke the boatmen, unpacked by the light of a kerosene lantern, and led the animals down the bank --

wide-nostrilled, doubtful. Saddles and packs were piled into the long narrow dug-out. The lantern followed. Horses and mules with high heads and erect ears moved reluctantly into the dark ripples. The dug-out left the bank, we saw the spot of light recede, the heads of animals, and the outline of the man in the stern, erect, with his twelve-foot pole like a spear, all surrounded by a sphere of blackness.

My turn came; I sat on a saddle amidships with a couple of halters in each hand. The canoe was just of a width to let my knees spread normally, yet those two men, bow and stern, stood high and calm. We made a trickling sound in the water. Beyond the reach of the lantern it was oily black. The horses were like chess knights, mere outstretched heads and distended nostrils. They pulled the halters taut. We travelled through nowhere, then we grounded and the animals heaved forward with a rush.

We packed, saddled, and went on. This is the way people used to travel in the Middle Ages, I thought, we have penalized ourselves with good roads and bridges.

The air was full of the warm caressing night and the growth of things. There was Orion in his winter position, high up. The Bears cannot compare with him; he is the Lord of Nostalgia.

White houses on each side of the trail showed ghostly. They became frequent, closed together to line an unreal street. We turned to the left. Our head man had stopped under a lantern, The pack train bunched up behind him, standing in their tracks, heads low.

"This is Nacajuca, we can sleep at the Guest House here."

Ahead of us we heard a guitar. Our horses' hooves rang on cobble-stones, we were riding with a gentle clank of iron shoes and whisper of bits and spurs, between white-colonnaded shuttered houses. There was another lamp, and three men under an archway seated before a fourth playing a guitar, the night watch. One of them took us across the plaza, past a simple church with an outside stairway to the belfry making an eccentric arc of shadow against the white wall, past the market, just a square roof on white columns and cross-beams of structural necessity, which a lantern within turned into a vastly significant, modern design.

We stopped by another colonnaded house. The watchman hammered on the door.

"Dota Teresa, Dotia Teresa, aqui vienen gente para posar la noche!"

For a long time silence; then a light, and whispering behind the bolted door. We all shouted.

Something was said from within. There were explanations and hesitations. At last the door swung open, and Dojia Teresa inspected us, candle in hand. We rode into the front room, unsaddled, and drove our horses through a dark second room and an archway behind, that might have given on to the Pit. We had travelled so far, we arrived so late; she made a motherly bustle as she prepared cocoa while we slung our hammocks.

PRELUDE

BY RALPH CHEEVER DUNNING

Seeing this ulcer redden to a head

I will aloof and draw a parallel

Under the Lion and out towards Hercules
Along the frontiers of the false eternal

So when we meet in hate or part in love

We'll know not which is under or above

Nor any word that any tongue can tell

Shall make this corpse of honour seem less dead.

Use the old values, speak the old jargon still
Life is a rigolade, a dream, or what you will.

I have no friend that I should say farewell.

A lonesome heaven and a separate hell
Divide my soul. Bastard of Chance

The Comet of a Phantom Universe

Too fond to bless and much too proud to curse
Still wouldst thou live and let thy memory die
In souvenirs of opium afternoons

Lying at ease till evening and a moon

So big it made a margin of the sky

Covered thy loves and dawning wish to die?

Who shall forgive the laugh thou wouldst not laugh

And pride that stiffened at a kiss as such?
"Not modesty but scorn" thine epitaph
Thy lying epitaph who loved the world too much.

JUNGLE RIVER
BY GLENN WARD DRESBACH

The hot moist breath that tropic earth exhales
Is held in jungle by the heavy air

And colours glinting like a serpent's scales
Creep out of shadow-patterns everywhere.

And under boughs that coiling vines have bent
The oily silent river slides away

Into the insect-whirl, at last to vent
Its yellow poison in an azure bay.

On each dead limb a buzzard's silhouette
Observes the drifting log turn crocodile,

And in a hollowed log a back of jet
Streams and the paddle dips another mile

To some half tipsy wharf where produce piles
And black girls wait with moist inviting smiles.

IRISH LETTER
JOHN EGLINTON

July, 1928

THERE are still two Irelands, and I only accentuate this statement when I say that if you ask a patriotic Irishman -- whether the final product of civilization in Ireland is exactly a patriot is another matter -- if any progress is being made towards unity, he will answer, Certainly, meaning that it is his Ireland which is prevailing. The Ireland which calls itself "Irish Ireland," and is still strong enough to enforce the teaching of the Irish language in the schools, professes confidence that in a generation or two Ireland will be an Irish-speaking community; while the Anglo-Irish, elated by the victory of their ideals, are at least equally confident that less and less will be heard of the old language as Ireland profits by the lessons of responsibility. It is hardly possible to doubt that in this matter it is the Anglo-Irish who are right. Ireland has been saved by the sensible conduct of the old Unionist population, who have given their whole-hearted support to the new government. When we consider their admirable behaviour, and contrast the good humour with which they have adapted themselves to an unwelcome situation with the vague and still clamorous dissatisfaction of those who have brought it about, we must conclude that Unionism has proved the best school of nationality.

"Irish Ireland," however, possesses one important advantage over its rival, similar to the advantage enjoyed in a divided kingdom by the party which retains in custody the person of the monarch. The old Irish language belongs in a special sense to this party inasmuch as it is this party which would make the language, with all its indefeasible claims to an ancient inheritance, the supreme arbiter of the situation. "No Irish language, no Irish nation" ; "it is impossible," says Mr De Valera, "to imagine Ireland free without its being Gaelic." The Anglo-Irish are willing to maintain the old language, to put its name to all public documents, to give it comfortable days in honourable retirement, but it is "Irish Ireland" which wishes to revive its absolute sway. What then to do with this inconvenient claimant? I have a private impression that the newly constituted Free State government is seriously embarrassed by this problem, and would give a good deal to be rid of it,] hardly think that the language is now much loved really for its present self: in itself it is rather a cross-grained ignorant old survivor, addicted to cursing and to crooning snatches of ancient song in a voice which makes one feel creepy. There are indeed many who love it for what it was; and when, like Edmund Spenser in his day, we cause the passionate love-poems written in Irish even one hundred years ago "to be translated unto us," we cannot but feel towards this old language as we might feel when gazing upon the withered age of some village crone, renowned in former days for her matchless beauty and romantic history.

It is a pity that Ireland has never produced a writer with a philosophic cast of mind, at least one to whom people in Ireland generally have been disposed to listen. From the cultural point

of view they possess one great advantage in the presence amongst them of an ancient language, and of a closed literature reaching back into a past which continually piques and baffles the historic imagination. This was enough to give Ireland, for literary purposes, the full status of nationality. It is impossible to over-estimate the advantage of this possession as a source of rejuvenation and distinction in the use of the work-a-day English language. But to see advantages in their proper places belongs to the philosophic mind, and this gift of the gods to Ireland has become a veritable apple of discord, simply because there is no one in Ireland who knows precisely what to do with it. It was an evil day for Ireland when Eris the goddess of discord (politics in a word) snatched at this great cultural gift; for in abusing the gift, Ireland is as likely as not to forfeit its use. No one indeed could perform a greater service to Ireland than to show convincingly what Ireland should do with it. Politics interfered in this matter where it had no real concern. The whole argument of "Irish Ireland" is extremely questionable, and it may very well be that the deliberate change by a nation of its language is a far more powerful demonstration of national vitality than the most tenacious preservation of a language from century to century could ever be. We see this in the history of Ireland, where in the time of O'Connell, with as much deliberation as nations use in such matters, the Irish-speaking population, wearying of that ancient world into which the language closed it took to English, rising at once into a political self-consciousness, which proved highly embarrassing to its imperial neighbour. Contrast in this respect Ireland with Wales, where no O'Connell rose to convince his compatriots that they were "the finest peasantry in the world," and that to demonstrate their equality with the English they had only to wear top-hats and to talk English at least as well as the yokels of Yorkshire and Sussex. Wales indeed has had its Lloyd George if not its Parnell; but where are its Bernard Shaws and George Moores, its Yeatses and AEs? I have never been able to get rid of an impression of the spiritual status of Wales acquired one evening long ago in Bangor, when to beguile the tedium of waiting for a train I walked up and down the main street and was presently joined by a man who proved to be a village schoolmaster. As we walked, he confessed to me that he had suddenly felt the need of talking to somebody in English -- "in Corwen, where I live," he said, "they talk of nothing but farming." Yet if a Welsh O'Connell were to persuade his countrymen to give up their language, the impoverishment in the cultural resources of the British Islands would not be negligible.

When a writer finds that a suggestion of his own, which received no attention when it was made, has occurred later on by force of circumstances to others, he may perhaps be allowed to quote himself, just as Cassandra may have been allowed the melancholy privilege of saying, I told you so. Writing in the first series of *The Irish Statesman*, in 1919, I suggested that the old language should

be granted a strip of Irish territory. "If it could only be managed, there might be a solution of the Irish language problem in the regular establishment of an Irish-speaking community in a province of its own -- answering to Wales in Great Britain -- say, a large slice of Munster and Connaught. Even the most confident Gaelic Leaguer must occasionally have his doubts of being able to do in Ireland what the Czechs have done in Bohemia. Let them begin with an Irish Wales -- it might really be managed, even to the point of obtaining assistance from the British Government, which might be glad enough to see a movement thus disposed of, which is a large part of the inspiration of Sinn Féin. The Irish language, within a territory of its own, might more hopefully attempt the conquest of the rest of Ireland. Heaven knows whether we should not all in time want to go and live there! . . . The Irish language will never command the respect due to it until it has a bit of land of its own." There is now some talk of a separately established Gaeltacht, and this appears to me to be the ideal solution of the language problem.

There died lately in the Isle of Wight an aged man with whom passed away a form of idealism belonging not so much to Ireland as to that period in England which was marked by a response to the influence of Carlyle -- now, as it would seem, altogether spent. Kingsley had the same sense of heroism in the past as Standish O'Grady, and in several respects the two men might be compared: in their boyish high spirits, in their love of the Elizabethan period, and even in their literary styles. An Anglo-Irish Kingsley O'Grady might have remained, writing Carlylese sociology and books for boys, but for a memorable "Wet Day" which kept him indoors in a large private library, where he stumbled on O'Halloran's account of pre-Christian Ireland. The Irish Literary Movement may almost be said to have grown out of that "wet day." O'Grady had a delicate, might I say Christian sense of heroism in the past, and in lighting upon a virgin subject-matter, lying close to his doors, was more fortunate than Kingsley, who had to turn back to the Anglo-Saxon period and to Greek mythology, with little hope of finding anything new and strange. It was O'Grady who discovered the true use of the ancient Irish language and literature for any national literary development, which, as he never thought of doubting, must be in the English language. Yeats, AE, James Stephens, even Arthur Griffith and P. H. Pearse, have avowed themselves his disciples. The names last mentioned remind one that a good many things which O'Grady's sad old face contemplated with disapproval took direction partly from his influence. He had dreamed of an Ireland with a spiritual mission, and the old Unionist order was the setting to which he had accustomed his expectation.

VIENNA LETTER

HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL
July, 1928

IT IS awkward to speak of one's own work, but to do so is a temptation; and the moment of launching has its special suspense. In attempting to unfold an idea we soon realize how much is hidden even from ourselves, who should find it all plain before us. A work never seems so self-sufficient as at the instant when we supposed we were going to be able to make it subserve this or that unholy end. The most "likely" as they say, commentator on one's work, is also the most handicapped, the least empowered to unravel the network of motives. For he has made every effort to interweave the internal with the external, strand by strand, and to leave no loose ends. So he is in difficulties at the outset.

We hear of poet and musician working toward a common end -- Corneille with Lully, Calzabigi with Gluck, Daponte and Schikaneder with Mozart. That such instances exist would hardly justify any one's expecting, however, that I should of necessity resort to such an expedient. There is in Nadler's *Literaturgeschichte*, I notice, a passage concerning my work, which states that my earliest dramas had unconsciously felt after music, a trend which the word "lyrical" denotes but approximately. And the author is right; but to my mind the word is accurate. The French call an opera a *drame lyrique*, and in this respect they are doubtless instinctively closer to the Ancients than we -- they never wholly forgot that ancient tragedy was sung tragedy.

And so the result was this collaboration,' which in the course of eighteen years has gradually become a matter of habit. But there have been pauses in the progress -- a period of eight or nine years in the last instance -- yet certainly not through any loss of interest in the concept -- it was merely that other things were needing to take form: a comedy, the *Salzburger Welttheater*, a tragedy, the as yet unpublished beginnings of a novel. Since 1920 a certain subject, a certain group of characters, had played in the imagination, glittering and intangible, like a half hidden stream -- the very material of the work just completed: the home-coming of Helen and Menelaus. A certain curiosity had taken hold of the imagination, centring on these mythical characters as if they were real people about whose lives we knew something, although at important points the connexion was missing. The night the Greeks swarmed into burning Troy (since 1914 it is easier to picture the terrors of such a night) the night Menelaus found his wife in one of the burning palaces and carried her out through the tottering walls -- her, his loved stolen mate, the; most beautiful woman in the world, cause of the war, of those ten terrible years, of the plain filled with dead, of this conflagration; widow of Paris, and friend of Priam's sons

-- these ten or twelve now dead or dying -- and thus widow, as though it were not already enough, of these ten or twelve young princes! To be confronted with all this! It is unimaginable -- and is safe from every dramatist: no text, even that of Shakespeare, could do it justice, and I am sure that Menelaus himself kept silence as he bore to his ship this woman who remained, as before, the most beautiful woman in the world. We do not know what followed. But years after, when he was travelling through the kingdoms of Greece to seek news of his lost father, Ulysses' son came to Sparta -- and the fourth canto of the Odyssey gives us the clearest report of what he found there, in colours as fresh as though applied yesterday. He finds Menelaus in his palace, a kingly, hospitable man, "stately as a god"; and Helen, the house-keeper of the palace, beautiful as ever, a queen -- apparently happy -- in this peaceful setting. They are celebrating the marriages of their children, a son and a daughter. They speak of Troy and the war, as things of the past, Menelaus with calm dignity, as of one of the major experiences of his life, but Helen with that elate, sovereign air which Homer imparts to her always -- touching on past events and the subject of her guilt, lightly and elegantly, as when she says of the war (by way merely of indicating time): "When ye Grecians came to Troy because of me, immodest one, arousing fierce war . . ." she says it quite lightly: "When through my hapless adventure this story came about which is too well known and too unworthy to linger over."

Astonishing to treat so famous and dreadful an event so lightly. And another word is on the tip of our tongue: how modern, how near in expression to our own times. But one asks involuntarily, what had happened meanwhile? What has intervened for these two, between that night and this serenity in which Telemachus finds her? What can have occurred to make this union once more peaceful and halcyon? It is extraordinary -- even making vast allowances for heroes and demi-gods. Sufficiently keen curiosity, furthermore, can be transformed into inspiration. There was a theme here -- if curiosity could be made productive -- perhaps a lyric theme in quest of music, though at first I did not realize this. The subject occupied me from the year 1920 on. We have, of course, the Helen of Euripides, the only ancient poem that treats of this interval -- of the return of Helen and Menelaus from Troy. In it the theme of a "phantom" Helen emerges -- a second Helen who is not Trojan, but Egyptian. We are in Egypt, or on the island of Pharos which is a part of Egypt, before a royal castle. Menelaus enters, alone, on his return from Troy. For months his ship has been wandering, blown from coast to coast, but always driven off the homeward course. Helen, his reclaimed wife, has been left behind with his warriors in a concealed cove and he is seeking counsel, help, some oracle to tell him how he can find the way home. Then from the columns of the castle Helen emerges, not the beautiful, sadly compromised Helen left by him in the

ship; but still another who is yet the same. And she will have it that she is his wife, insisting that the other Helen in the ship, is nothing and no one, a phantom, a make-believe, whom Hera had put in the arms of Paris to delude the Greeks. For the sake of this phantom a ten-years' war had been waged, tens of thousands of the finest men had perished, the most flourishing city of Asia had sunk into ashes. Meanwhile she, the real Helen has been borne over the sea by Hermes, and has lived in this royal castle, honoured and protected by the aged Proteus. Now however his son is on the throne, and his one desire is to marry her. Menelaus therefore, to whom she has always been faithful, must quickly and secretly steal her away. The preparations for this flight, its execution, and finally the appearance of the Dioscuri who pacify the enraged Egyptian monarch -- this is the plot of Euripides' play.

It is easy to see why Menelaus should not immediately have full confidence in this creature who appeared before him to tell him that he had spent ten years in the field for the sake of a ghost, had sacrificed the blood of tens of thousands of Greeks to a ghost, had set fire to a great city in behalf of a ghost, and was now journeying homeward with a ghost as his companion. They engage for a long time in sharp Euripidean argument; and now he utters the beautiful and accurate words: "I trust the burden of past sufferings more than I trust thee!" Indeed this must seem to him too easy a shedding of grave responsibilities. But at this moment a messenger arrives and really announces that the creature who was thought to be Helen has disappeared from the vessel, dissolving in a wisp of fiery air. What is there for Menelaus to cling to but the one Helen who is left -- her purity and unguilt superadded -- and to flee with her before the Egyptian king can deprive him of her also? So far Euripides. But if the Trojan war was waged in behalf of a spectre, and this Helen of Egypt is the one true Helen, then the Trojan war was a nightmare, and the whole falls into two halves, a ghost story and an idyll, which have nothing to do with each other -- and all this is not very interesting. I forgot Euripides, but my imagination continued to dwell on the episode of the two returning together. What dread thing could have happened, to bring about their reconciliation? It was to me so puzzling; perhaps the only solution was witchcraft; but witchcraft solves nothing for our emotions. The powers of nature would have to participate -- an atmosphere of industrious beings at once indifferent and helpful. Less to cure the half-goddess than for Menelaus, so distraught, confronted by such fatefulness, such complications and guilt -- and he but human. I immediately perceived the noble, tragic aspect of this much derided figure. He was for me the embodiment of the West, and she the inexhaustible strength of the Orient. He stood for law, marriage, fatherhood. She soared above all that, the mysterious, enchanting, never-to-be-fettered goddess. Years ago I entered in my note-book a sentence from Bachofen: "Helen was not endowed with all the charms of

Pandora merely to resign herself to the exclusive possession of one man." What demonism pervades such a statement! It could stand on the title-page of Wedekind's *Erdgeist*. Wedekind was the man to bring out the full purport of such a sentence, and to make of it something remarkable and terrifying.

Two or three years later I asked Strauss to wait for me in his office at the opera. "I want to go over a two-act plot with you," I said. "When the curtain rises we are in a palace, or kind of villa on the sea. The palace belongs to a handsome young person who is the daughter of a certain king and the mistress of Poseidon." "Does Poseidon appear?"

"No, Poseidon does not appear. No gods at all. Accept everything just as though it took place two or three years ago, somewhere between Moscow and New York. This young person, whom [call Aithra, is often left alone by her lover. But he may arrive at any moment. Thus, every evening she has the table set for two -- and it is set for two now, and the stage is brilliantly lighted. She has servants and a well-furnished house, but not much company.

"Among the appurtenances of this room there is a mussel which is aware of everything that happens at sea; and in order to amuse Aithra, it tells her everything it knows.

"One evening the mussel announces that in a ship close at hand a remarkable thing is occurring. A man on this ship entrusts the helm to another, goes below, gazes on a very beautiful woman who lies there sleeping, gently covers her beautiful face with a cloth, then draws out a peculiar curved dagger, and prepares to kill her. 'Send a storm,' cries the mussel, excited by its own tale. 'And be quick! Or the woman is lost!'"

"Can Aithra do that?"

"Yes, she is magician enough. The storm swoops down, lashing the vessel till its timbers groan; and thus the murder is prevented. But Aithra has first asked hastily who the man and woman are, and the mussel has said that they are Helen of Troy and Menelaus, her husband. Aithra cannot contain herself for joy and passes from prose into a rhapsodic little aria. Then she rushes into the next room, hides, and directs a servant to lead the shipwrecked couple there by torch-light. For the mussel has also announced that the man who was about to slay his wife is now -- since they have both been washed overboard -- making every effort to convey her to safety; and Aithra has immediately commanded the storm to abate.

"Thus the stage is empty, and in the doorway of the brightly lighted room a man appears, holding a curved dagger between his teeth, and leading a most beautiful fair-haired woman by the hand. For as soon as he feels solid ground under his feet, the murderer and avenger in him is aroused again, and he is once more ready to take his dagger in hand and make an end of her. Helen knows it; she knows everything that is going on in his mind. This is her strength ; it is what enables her to remain mistress of the situation; otherwise she would not be Helen. Going to the mirror, she arranges her hair; and as a table stands there beautifully set, and with two chairs -- as though in readiness for a king and queen -- she invites her husband to be seated and to join her at supper."

"And Menelaus?"

"For nine days and nine nights -- as long as they have been on the way from Troy -- he has neither taken a meal with her nor so much as touched her with his finger-tip. For nine days he has been trying to decide whether to kill her on the ship or to sacrifice her the day after reaching Sparta. For he knows that she must die -- at his hand -- and by this same curving dagger with which he has cut the throat of Paris. And she also knows it -- as she knows that he loves her to despair, but that he must act regardless of his love. This knowledge and understanding of the man she loves (and she loves the man to whom she belongs, so long as she is his) -- this constitutes, as I have said, her strength. Besides, Aithra is present."

"How can Aithra save her from this predicament?"

"By a stratagem. Menelaus is in a state near to madness. He can no longer bear up under his experiences of the last nine days. He is deranged by the proximity of his wife, the sense of having her again in his possession, and the unavoidable necessity of slaying her with his own hand. And a little ruse of Aithra's serves to make his distraction complete. It occurs to her to summon her elves, lemur-like semi-human creatures, more malicious than kindly, crouched outside in the moonlight on the rocks of the beach. She directs them to contrive something to bewilder Menelaus, for the time being at least, since the dagger is drawn and everything will depend upon the next moment. The elves are quick and expert, they raise a savage, warlike din, and Menelaus imagines that he is again hearing the Trojan signals and the clatter of Trojan armour. He clearly distinguishes the voice of Paris challenging him to combat. His exhausted brain can no longer resist this bit of magic and he rushes out, to slay Paris again -- or, if it is a ghost, to strangle the ghost. The two women, the mistress of the house and her guest, are alone. After a few words, they understand each other. Aithra has a wondrous potion, an exceptional sedative made of lotos, which induces forgetfulness. Helen drinks, becomes quiet as a

child; under the calming touch of her friend, lifts like a half-wilted rose put in water. She has all but forgotten what awaits her, when her husband returns with the dagger. But Aithra has presence of mind enough for both. She tells her maids to lead Helen away to rest in her own bed; then turning, and with profound calm, she confronts Menelaus. For he has come storming in, brandishing the dagger which, to his eyes, drips blood (though we see that the blade is clean and dry); for while he was gone he stabbed in the back two spectres which he mistook for Helen and Paris. He cannot explain how Paris should, after dying, have returned to embrace the living Helen; he cannot make such things fit together logically. He is no madman, but is in that state of confusion observed in hospitals during the war, among men who had gone through too terrifying a strain. On the other hand he is not so beside himself that he would fail of respect towards the young lady who now stands before him and in whose home he evidently is -- the less, that she addresses him by his title, King of Sparta, and begs him to sit down. Aithra now tells him a fairy-story which, with feminine tact, she adapts to his present state of mind, the mood of a distracted man who no longer trusts his senses and reason, and to whom almost anything seems possible, imagining as he does that he has himself committed the most frightful and impossible act. For ten years, she tells him, he was the victim of a phantom which he carried from the burning city that night of the conflagration -- a ghost for which thousands of Greeks have died, which he bore about his neck out of the sea, and which he has just now seemed to stab. At the same time she pours for him some of the potion which calms the nerves and lulls the consciousness into a gentle, rhythmic state of dream. Then she begs him not to speak too loud lest he disturb the beautiful woman now asleep on her bed in the next room. . . ."

"What beautiful woman?"

"None other than his wife, his own Helen, the real Helen (again she extends to him the goblet of lotos juice) that only Helen, she whom the gods stole away ten years ago. 'In sleep she was borne across the sea to us here in Egypt, to the castle of my father. She has spent the years sheltered, half slumbering, never aging, with ever that same smile on her lips. She thinks that she has fallen asleep in your arms; but soon, soon, she will awake. Prepare!'

"Suddenly the adjoining room is brilliant with light, a curtain divides, on a broad couch Helen is just opening her eyes, refreshed by sleep, younger and more beautiful than ever -- as fair as on her wedding-day. How could a heart self-tormented like Menelaus', resist this wealth of un hoped-for happiness? Across the darkened mirror of his mind flits a fear that it may be the spectre of his wife, long dead and now conjured up by a witch and necromancer. But

misgiving succumbs to the brilliance of the vision; the potion is working in his veins: a gentle forgetfulness of horror and suffering, an inner harmony, an unutterable peace. He approaches the lovely creature; she inclines toward him, her head touches him; it is she, Helen of Sparta -- knowing naught of Paris. Their voices mingle, and the clear voice of Aithra adds itself."

"The play is over then? What is there left to happen in the second act?"

"It could be; a frivolous little comedy in that case, in which a husband, after frightful adventures, is duped by two women. But these characters were not so meant. Do you think so? This Menelaus and this Helen did not look as though this were the end?"

"No -- but how?"

"Nor are the elves of the opinion that the play could end there. These elves are always present as an invisible chorus; they see it all as drama, and this conclusion is too mild for them. They are not willing that any one should come out of the business so cheaply. Invisibly but audibly, they jeer at the plot. 'Never!' they hiss. 'Not so easily!'"

"And the second act takes place, I suspect, the following morning?"

"Yes, but not in the house of Aithra."

"Not there?"

"A long distance from there, in the wilderness, not far from Mount Atlas. Towards the end of the first act Helen asks Aithra in a whisper, if she could translate her and Menelaus to a region where not even the name of Helen has been heard, or any rumour of the Trojan war. She craves solitude that she may enjoy the felicity she has so perilously regained -- safe from notoriety. And Aithra says: 'Nothing could be easier. When you are both fast asleep I shall lay my magic cloak over you and it will bear you to a place where you will be quite alone.' But the whispered conversation has not been heard by Menelaus. So they wake in solitude, in a beautiful palm-grove at the foot of Mount Atlas. I shall not go into detail about the second act, but give only the main points, They are not long in solitude. As nowadays, nomadic, knightly chiefs range the desert and one of these, with his son and retinue, chances upon the two strangers. And though her name is unknown, the most beautiful woman thus finds herself in a situation identical with that at home: both father and son fall in love, want to snatch her from Menelaus, and are prepared to kill each other for her. But this is a detail. I am coming to the heart

of the matter -- namely, Helen. The strength of this woman, her genius, lies in the fact that she must wholly possess the man to whom she belongs. The apparently successful ruse, however, has restored to her but half of Menelaus or less than half. He regards her, after the night of love, with uneasiness; he is really afraid of her. He is engrossed with the thought of the woman whom he thinks dead, the woman who has caused him so much grief, for whom he has suffered nights of horror, for whom he has slain Paris -- and whom, that last evening on the island, he murdered with the same frightful weapon, his curved dagger. For in his confusion he still believes that he killed the real, the guilty Helen -- and that this other, so young and innocent-looking, this mirage, this Egyptian siren of air, has been given him by the enchantress as solace. But he is Menelaus of Troy, the widower, the murderer of Helen. She is everything to him, he is bound to her by a world of guilt and suffering; and the beautiful siren before him is nothing."

"And Helen?"

"Understands him once again, knows him more profoundly than he knows himself, and makes a decision."

"What?"

"She resolves to awake him, as from a trance, and to rid him of his illusion, that he may recognize her as the guilty one he must punish. She will, that is to say, reconstruct the situation of the previous evening."

"And does she?"

"She succeeds in everything she turns her mind to. She has a demonic power. And Aithra coming to her assistance, provides, as Helen wishes, a potion to counteract the potion of forgetfulness. Helen approaches and places herself beneath the drawn dagger, sure that Menelaus will kill her, and smiles at dagger and murderer, in the exact posture of twelve hours ago on the island."

"And he?"

"At last he has come to recognize her, to recognize her fully, at that last moment -- and letting go the dagger, falls into her arms." ,

"It is an opera -- for me, at any rate, if not for others. And what a part for Jeritza! You haven't mentioned it to any one? It is besides, astonishingly modern. Have you never thought of making a prose play of it?"

"Yes, I feel myself that beneath the hand of a French or American author it would become a society drama. By slight changes the mythical elements could be eliminated. And the bits of magic -- the potion, the forgetfulness and restoring of memory -- are mere short-cuts abridging mental processes. The elves stand for the subconscious censor. All this could have been dialectic; and so have become standard psychological society drama: marriage as problem, beauty as problem, a tangle of problems."

"Well?"

"I don't like very well dialectic motivation in drama and doubt that purposive speech can convey the dramatic. Words can ruin our best effects and I am wary of them."

"Yet a poet can give his characters life only by making them speak. Words are to him what tones are to me, and colours to a painter."

"Words, yes -- but not purposive, deliberately schematized speech. Not what is called the art of dialogue, or psychological dialogue, which seems to have stood in such high repute from Hebbel to Ibsen and further still -- and in Euripides -- and also in Shaw, though as here tempered by a predilection for wit, it neutralizes the dialectic quality of the dialogue."

"And in Shakespeare?"

"Not a trace! For him speech is expression, never information. In this sense Shakespeare wrote pure opera; he is wholly with Aeschylus and miles from Euripides. But has it never occurred to you that in life nothing ever is decided by talking? We are never so alone, never so convinced of the hopelessness of a situation, as when we have been trying to help it with words. The deceptive power of speech is so great that it not only distorts, but even dissolves, the character of the speaker. Dialectic forces the ego out of existence. A writer has, I insist, the choice of creating conversation or character!"

"A little paradoxical for me! For the playwright has no medium but speech."

"Yet, there are other resources; most mysterious, most precious, least known -- and the only effective ones. He can do anything when he has given up the idea that his characters should substantiate their existence by direct communication."

"What medium is that?"

"By the turns of the plot he can convey without informing. He

can make something live in the audience without the audience's suspecting how this has come about. He can make people feel the complexity of the apparently simple, the identity of the seemingly disparate. He can show how a woman becomes a goddess, how something living emerges as something dead -- he can give a premonition of the vast agglomerate which the mask of the ego transforms into a human being. Thus the Ancients designated both mask and person by the same word. He can convert the reticent into the eloquent, make what is far distant, near. He can allow his characters to exceed themselves and become gigantic, for mortals do this on signal occasions. But there is no room for such things in a 'naturally' conducted dialogue. 'Realism' is projecting elusive experience upon an arbitrarily chosen social plane. Human nature, its cosmic influences and its encompassing of time and space, cannot be captured by realistic means."

"But what kind of medium is this? Will you not define it?"

"By developing the plot, complicating the motive, giving voice to the hidden, and allowing things once uttered to disappear again -- through similarities of character, analogies of situation, intonation which often says more than words."

"But that is my -- that is certainly the medium of the musician!"

"It is the medium of lyric drama, and the only one, it seems to me, through which the atmosphere of our time can be expressed. For the present is, if anything, mythical. I know of no other term for a reality which is being enacted before such wide horizons, for

our place among the centuries, for this confluence of Orient and Occident within our ego, for the vast internal breadth, the frantic inner tensions, the Here and Elsewhere, which characterize contemporary life. It is not possible to capture such things in clumsy dialogue. Mythological opera is, you may be sure, of all forms the most authentic."

**Egyptian Helen*, with score by Richard Strauss, to be produced in New York the coming season.

POETIC ENFRANCHISEMENT

Cities of the Plain. By Marcel Proust. Translated from the French by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. Two

volumes. r2mo. 352 and 384 pages. Albert & Charles Boni. \$15.

WITHOUT our knowledge or concurrence we are, each one of us, a little closed system of preconceptions, our imaginations hobbled by custom, our thoughts as sedately guarded, as carefully regulated, as those long lines of pale orphans in their black uniforms led out for their daily walk by the unsmiling head of the establishment. Our illusions, so sedulously garnered, so anxiously cherished, so bitterly defended, are the props by which we live; habit, the prison through which we move; fear, the sentinel that foils us in our endeavour to issue into a universe too vast and frightening for our uncertain nerves.

It is the privilege of great and original minds to let down for us those bars held in place by the unconscious conspiracy of a timorous and torpid society, and to guide us with firm directions into a more audacious view of existence; it is the greater privilege of the artist, not only to heighten our vision of that reality beyond reality, the truths which lurk so fugitively under the ordinary accepted aspects of the objects surrounding us, but to charm and fructify us at the same time, to rouse our own dormant potentialities, to force us into creative thought, to render us more aware of the implications of our own lives, to indicate the greatest disaster that can befall us, apart from disease, destitution, or death, namely, that of losing our capacity for fresh and penetrating response. This no author has done to a more marked degree than has Marcel Proust. Open any of his volumes at random, and you are led on from sentence to sentence, from page to page, from chapter to chapter, until stirring within you is a new power, a more bold and delicate insight, a whole fresh set of interests and appreciations, and at last an entire world of people takes sensible shape, a world more vivid, more intimately realized, more interesting, than any you have known or will probably ever be privileged to know. This, to a certain extent, might be said of any novelist, of Henry James to whom Proust has by an authoritative English critic, been unfavourably compared. But how restricted, how narrowly genteel, how lacking in humour, is *Châtes* master of the social situation, rare as his gift to us will always remain, compared to the unfettered perspicacity of the disillusioned Frenchman. And of the two it is certainly not Marcel Proust whom one can accuse of snobbishness. Only the most obtuse of critics could have started such a rumour. He has chosen to portray that portion of society which, since it is the most aristocratic, is also the most historically interesting, in which more diverse and complicated types sooner or later appear, and where the assumption of superiority being greater and the play of wit more fierce and more light, the challenge to discrimination is proportionately more exigent. But he has, at the same time, parallel with this privileged upper world, depicted with an insight

heretofore unequalled the world that serves it, that must bow down to its whims -- the valets, the cooks, the bell-boys, the coachmen -- a world made up of the same types as its masters, as arrogant and as limited, but rendered servile, cunning, and affable through necessity.

In these last of his volumes to be translated, alternating with the themes already familiar to us in his previous writing -- the tortures of normal attraction with its unrelenting doubts, its ennui and its sudden rewards, all so fleeting and all so important; the outward pretentiousness and the malicious undercurrents of a small, homogeneous group; the delicious sensations of the country; the changing aspects of the sea -- is the major motif of a love heretofore banished from the pages of fiction. By society at large sexual inversion has been regarded either as a vice so revolting and unnatural that a conspiracy of silence has prevailed, or so dangerous that it must receive immediate public castigation. Since the newer psychology has explained it in terms of a malady, another attitude has among the enlightened come into fashion, but even this attitude, so supercilious in its tolerance or so vulgar in its frivolity, veils a contempt which betrays a sense of superiority and a limited sympathy. No writer before Marcel Proust has dared, or has perhaps been permitted, to touch with so free a pen on so dark a subject. We can imagine no author who could have possibly done it with so relentless yet so tender an understanding, with such consummate art. And be it said, we are not among those who discover a "defect" in his "moral sensibility" because of the inclusion of certain much discussed episodes. Candour absolves everything, and for the artist curiosity, combined with spiritual detachment, is essential. Sensitiveness is the unique virtue, and the passionate weight of certain pages of this profound and revealing book should cause hesitation to those who judge certain other passages with too great temper. As alert to the conflicts of his characters, to their sufferings, their pitiable subterfuges, the nervous masks through which their telltale eyes look out, as a lover to the steps of his mistress, Proust can never be accused of moral insensibility.

To follow the possessed divagations of the Baron de Charlus, the sly, self-interested deceptions of Morel, is to be initiated into a life as fantastic as it is absorbing. Tragedy and comedy alternate with so swift and so equal a balance, and our shocks are so softened by our increasing perceptions, that presently our dispraise dissolves, and only our understanding remains, our instructed and compassionate understanding. Moral indignation has no place where the instincts are seen striving, with the desperate zeal of necessity, to create within the small space allotted them by a withered or frightened society the very breath of life itself.

To blame or criticize Marcel Proust because his philosophy is

one of despair is to miss much of the intensity of his writing. Because he never forgets death he equally never forgets life. Unlike Leopardi, "pale amant de la mort," Proust seeks to extract from life each little drop of experience it has to give, to bathe himself in it; he does not court death, he covets life, but at the same time sees it, like the wild ass's skin, shrinking hour by hour. His descriptions of nature are like those of a convalescent returning to the strange and overpowering revelation of an existence which only one who realizes its dreamlike quality, its fleeting duration, is able to achieve. It is largely the secret of his rich, rash, and subtle meditations, this constant accompaniment in his mind of the knowledge that suddenly each sense, so swift to his bidding, so perfect an instrument of ravishment, will be blotted out, extinguished, and darkness will prevail. It is why his observations of the ephemeral niceties of an artificial society, its colossal illusions, its sentimentalities, and its crudeness, are so acute. All is nothing and therefore anything is everything. That he withdrew from life was due to his illness and it was only because he had lived with so submissive and dedicated an attention to the minutest measurement of experience that he was able to build with his art so splendid and so enduring an edifice.

MR LEWIS AND THE TIME-BEAST

Book review by Conrad Aiken

Time and Western Man. By Wyndham Lewis. Svo. 469 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$s.

The Wild Body. By Wyndham Lewis. 12mo. 298 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.50.

MR WYNDHAM LEWIS is a kind of jack-of-all-trades. He was one of the founders of Blast, that singular, and now so old-fashioned, organ of the cult known as Vorticism; for a time one associated him with Marinetti, with futurism, with concerts in which cannons were fired or guinea-pigs compelled to squeal, and with paintings which resembled rather minor and obscure explosions among bric-a-brac. That he had a vigorous and individual mind was evident enough; and that he could draw was admirably attested by occasional exhibitions of his work at the Leicester Galleries in London. Some of these -- notably those drawings in which he was least doctrinaire -- were characterized by a singular delicacy and purity, a quality which one might suggest by saying that it was a blending of the feminine and the mathematical. In fiction, he has now produced a novel and a book of short stories, both of them energetic and original, both of them somewhat marred by his passion for dogma, his love of controversy, or, in short, by his spleen.

In the realm of controversy itself, he has been increasingly a kind of angry sharpshooter of his generation. In this regard, he has somewhat resembled Mr Ezra Pound, with whom he was early associated; but the resemblance has been (if one may put it so) antithetical. Mr Pound's love of new "movements," and of being in the forefront of aesthetic battle, is well known. He has been one of the most striking entrepreneurs of our time: a brilliant, if occasionally misguided, leader of rebellions. Mr Lewis, on the other hand, if he has shared with Mr Pound this passion for novelty and for positions conspicuously dangerous, has differed from him in his emotional reason for doing so. For whereas Mr Pound has always been what he himself has described as a "broken bundle of mirrors," a sort of reflector of this and that and the other, Mr Lewis has remained singularly and truculently himself. He has wanted to be there, in this advanced position, but for a purpose of his own. Sufficiently a prey to this herd-instinct, and to this Zeitgeist, to desire a part in its "show," he was nevertheless somewhat annoyed (or so one guessed) at his weakness in obeying so base a desire. He was, in short, an individualist who had, willy-nilly, been swept along with a crowd whose components he could not wholly admire.

Something of this division has shown itself in all of Mr Lewis' work. One always feels in his criticism that he is himself a sort of exasperated victim of the very things which, with so magnificent and vivid a gusto, he attacks. He has become a professional enemy: one almost feels, indeed, that at times he merely attacks because only in attack can he become reassuringly aware (by a kind of negative assumption) of his own identity. One does not go to him for that Greek or Chinese serenity which, in his new book, he claims to admire ; hating the philosophy of the dynamic, he is nevertheless typically dynamic himself; at war with chaos, he adopts the language of chaos; desiring peace and assurance, and hungering for perfect rest, that perfect rest which only an almost religious conviction of the permanence and value of the ego can give, he contributes, in *Time and Western Man*, the most violent and confused and restless and peaceless of contemporary books of philosophy.

Mr Lewis' latest bête noire is the Time-doctrine of Spengler and Whitehead and Alexander, and of modern science in general. The present reviewer is not a metaphysician, and cannot presume, and does not particularly desire, to follow the argument in all its massive and chaotic detail. Suffice it to say that Mr Lewis hates the idea of flux and change and relativity; that he fears the consequences of such ideas; that he prefers the comparative calm and order which one may suck from the pure subjective idealism of Berkeley (a choice with which his reviewer is cheerfully but unexcitedly in sympathy) ; and that he attacks this latest time-ghost with an almost unexampled ferocity. Not only does he attack it

with ferocity; he also, like a man obsessed, sees it everywhere. If we are to take Mr Lewis' word for it, this time-beast is devouring us. It animates the pages of Marcel Proust, it deadens the pages of Mr Joyce's *Ulysses*, it prattles in the person of Miss Loos's Lorelei, it stammers in the protracted and posed and iterative Jongueurs of Miss Gertrude Stein, it even kicks its heels in the timed and timeless heels of Mr Chaplin. This is, to say the least, a singular collocation. Is one right in suspecting that Mr Lewis is so fixed on this notion that he has lost all sense of values? Is he merely, in this, following not so much a logical method as a method of which free association is the basis? At all events, the connexion becomes, at times, extremely attenuated; one suspects that there is no connexion at all, save in the emotional picture of our brilliant author. One is irresistibly reminded of Mr Rank's description of the habits of thought -- or feeling, to be more precise -- of the dementia-praecox, or schizophrenic, type of mind: of his suggestion that such people think in terms of "quality complexes," allowing the unguided mind to flow from image to image in obedience to feeling-associations. Thus, Miss Stein is clearly enough interested in the psychological idea of time; and she also prattles, iterates, stammers, is a kind of false-naïve child. We proceed therefore from the child-idea, and discover Miss Loos, who adopts the same pose, (in the person of her heroine) and assimilate her to the Stein-complex: and ipso facto, Miss Loos becomes a part of our idea about "time." From Miss Loos, it is only a step, or a frolic, to Mr Chaplin; and so on, and so on. And in the end, we have a kind of vague notion (extremely vague) that Mr Chaplin has something to do with Mr Spengler; which is very far from being the case.

Mr Lewis, in other words, is not to be trusted. He is brilliant, entertaining, fertile in suggestion, full of fine phrases, and bursting with energy; in the item, he is acute to the point of incandescence; he can knock on the head a Hegel or a James or a Heraclitus with as emphatic a maul as was ever wielded; but in the end one feels that he is a man obsessed, and blind to whole patterns. One begins to wonder what it is, in this harmless preoccupation of the present with the notion of time, which so upsets him. Is he terribly afraid of something? Is he afraid of flux? Is he afraid of the unknown? Why is he so insistent that the external world should be fixed? Why must he, like the mollusc, be so determined on a retreat into the positively apprehended of the ego? And will he carry this retreat further, or will he ultimately seek satisfaction in one of those grand orthodoxies, like the Church -- where he can be absolved of all responsibilities, and simply accept a reality? ...

The truth is, I suppose, that Mr Lewis is a dyed-in-the-wool romantic. He is part and parcel of his age; and while he attacks it, he is indelibly conditioned by it. Incapable of achieving the "long" view of man's place in the world, disquieted by scientific

analysis, of whatever sort, horrified by the prevailing doctrine of change and flux (which is no newer than Heraclitus) and frightened by modern psychology, as much as by relativity or the quantum theory, he lashes out against everything that is not the quietism of the idealist. And nevertheless, there is nothing of the quietist in him: nothing whatever. Here is no Platonic serenity, but the gesticulatory vehemence of the dynamists whom he would depose'; he is tainted, and deeply, with the excitements, the fashions and fads, of his age; too much himself a victim of the Time-beast, he is therefor largely a reactionist to the moment; he lacks the calm independence (?) of the scientist, on the one hand, and the poet on the other.

BRIEFER MENTION

The Ugly Duchess, by Leon Feuchtwanger, translated from the German by Willa and Edwin Muir (8vo, 335 pages; Viking Press: \$2.50) carries one forward from one climax to another with such biting and relentless intensity that the mind -- unaccustomed to such velocity and impact -- tingles as though exposed to a current of electricity. Perhaps the most conclusive proof of the high attainment which marks Feuchtwanger's second novel to be translated is that it evokes comparison with his first rather than with the work of any one else. Here the glamour of mediaeval times and the sinister plotting of ambitious princes are painted in full colours, while in the foreground stands the rocklike figure of Margarete of Tyrol like some strange creature half mythological, half modern.

The Woman Who Rode Away, by D. H. Lawrence (12mo, 307 pages; Knopf: \$2.50). Mr Lawrence reduces all humanity to Adam and Eve and studies them in the nude. Not a hint of a fig-leaf, though the stories date distinctly from "after the fall"! Lords and ladies, bootblacks and kitchen-maids are, at bottom, just Adams and Eves. Nudity is undoubtedly interesting to a perhaps over-dressed populace. A naked man can have a succès fou on any city street but in the end too much nudity, like too much of anything else, surfeits. Readers, even sympathetic ones, now begin to smile when Mr Lawrence's characters undress. However, this writer's gifts are undeniable. He enchains the attention instantly with his vivid dialogues and still more vivid landscapes, and if, as Mr E. M. Forster says, his moral lessons are sometimes obscure, they are, at least, never dull. He is certainly in the first flight of contemporary story-tellers.

Coron of Water, by Marjorie Meeker (12mo, 61 pages; Brentano's: \$1.50) ripples over the smooth stones of imagery with a murmur of melancholy. The poet sits in the twilight "spinning silver unquiet trickery." "Silver" and "unquiet" and "harsh" and "unfaith" are her favourite words, and

she fits them into the pattern of her verse with so little discrimination that they inevitably lose precision -- a minor flaw in what is otherwise authentic expression of poetic feeling.

The Best Poems of 1927, edited by L. A. G. Strong (16mo, 259 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$2). Their editor must be given high praise for this fascinating selection. The underlying test which has been drastically applied to the immense mass of last year's verse in England and America seems simply to have been interest. Hardly a dull page in the book!

Sextette, Translations from the French Symbolists, by Dorothy Martin, with preface by L. C. Martin (8vo, 99 pages; The Scholartis Press: 10/6). As aware as Dr Johnson that poetry cannot be translated, Miss Martin nevertheless ventures to put De Nerval, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, and Laforgue into English. She merely hopes to initiate certain mystified foreigners into the cult. This ought to be disarming; but will it be? No. There will be fierce critics to pounce on any particular rendering, such as, "Sunset and dawn within your eyes are fair," for Baudelaire's "Tu contiens dans ton oeil le couchant et l'aurore," and declare it terrible. But Miss Martin does often get astonishingly near to the rhythm of these French geniuses; erring, when she does err, on the side of over-clarity and over-reasonableness. The accompanying essays on the poets are admirable and will entice when the translations do not.

Four Plays, by Serafin and Joaquin Alvarez Quintero (12mo, 260 pages; Little, Brown: \$2.50) have been translated by Helen and Harvey Granville-Barker. They are selected from the hundred and fifty plays written by these living Spaniards. They are "a simple picture of life in a little Andalusian town," a sentimental comedy, a picaresque farce "with a difference," and a comedy of the Andalusian "exiled to the harsher world of Madrid." Without knowing the originals, one is instantly taken with the charm of the translated language. As in Anatol, the language one reads has pungency and character, and the plays become attractive and have at least the air of being important. One should like to see them played -- delicately.

The Seven Strings of the Lyre, The Romantic Life of George Sand, 1804-1876, by Elizabeth W. Schermerhorn (8vo, 327 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$4) is not perhaps, biography of a major sort. Yet it is an admirably careful and well-turned account of the commodiously romantic life of its great heroine. Possibly it will be found rather too contained. The reader, however, ought not to mistake sedateness for impercipience. There are ironies here (as indeed there could not but be upon such rich occasions); yet they are ironies forborne -- which are sufficiently rare phenomena in this sunken time, invaded as our biography too much is by the jibes of fashionably and cheaply malicious biographers.

=====

SEPTEMBER

ELEGY

BY GEORGE DILLON

I shall lose your face in the flickering of strange faces
That rush toward mine all day.
At night I shall go to the nervous, crowded places.
I shall concentrate on the people and the play,
And follow along to the dancing, and be gay.

I shall lose your voice in the anarchy of voices,
The rustle of wheels and footsteps and the wind.
I shall listen all day, I shall learn innumerable noises
To disentangle from what the city has dinned --
And at the end,

Waiting for sleep, I shall think of music, or say
Old rhymes, or pray.
All this to frighten the ghost of one sound away.

All this to frighten away one ghost who would start
Perilously into my blood by day and by night,
Perilously upon my mouth with the remembered kiss
Like a paralysis,

Till I am wound in your beauty as in a tightened net,
And suddenly it is enough, and I must forget,
Forget your beauty before I am mad with its sting!

I know the way. One loses part by part
Till all is lost but the unknowable thing,
The dream, the image not of sound or sight:

It is a wild perfume upon the world, it is the bright
Perpetual honey in the hive of spring,

It is the broken bell whose legends ring

Fatally and for ever in my heart.

ABOUT MURDERERS

BY MAXIM GORKI

Translated From the Russian by Marie Budberg

DELINQUENCY and criminality increase; murders are becoming more and more frequent; they are being committed with ever more sang-froid, and acquire a peculiar, ostentatious character. In all modern murders it is easy to perceive something affected, artificial ; the murderer seems to look upon the deed as a sportsman might, wishing only to establish fantastic records of cold-blooded cruelty. If one murderer has cut his victim's body into six pieces, the next is not content to stop short of a dozen. There can be no doubt that newspapers greatly contribute to an advance in criminality by publishing vivid, exciting, idealized accounts of crimes, in which the murderer becomes a hero, and his deed an act of heroism. Displaying keen interest in the criminal and indifference to his victim, the papers employ all their eloquence in describing the skill of the murderer, his craftiness, and daring. Authors of the so-called "detective story" play on the same brass trumpet of sensation. Their stories might with more justice be called defective!

Next, and with astounding success, the cinema assists these two by producing crime films. The zoological emotions of some are roused; the imagination of others is corrupted; and the rest of society is rendered insensible to the facts of crime; its feeling of revulsion is numbed. All this is done merely in order to provide entertainment for people who are bored; whereas more than likely the cinema augments and intensifies the ennui of people who, in the manner of drums, are empty inside and produce a sound only after receiving a shock from without. And there is no doubt that the number of men striving to attract attention is growing daily.

I am inclined to believe that for many people crime becomes a path to glory; for others, a pastime, easy, and even encouraged; for censure may encourage provided one adds to it a shade of wondrous amazement.

And what could be easier -- indeed absurdly -- than the murder of man by man in our day, after the annihilation -- for the sake of what? -- of millions of Europeans, the most valuable men of our planet, on the fields of France?

When some idiot cuts up his neighbour and devours him, he is discussed for a whole month, in conversation and in print, and is regarded as an exceptional, an amazing person; while nothing is known of the fact that Professor Oppel, by massage of the heart revived three men who had died on the operating table; nobody writes about it. In this juxtaposition of the versions of social life and the miracles of science a subject of grave importance lies concealed. How is it that of the many upright European

minds none has thus far made anything of such a possibility in all its scope?

Light could have been thrown on fatal misunderstanding and have destroyed it and might have shown how oppressively, how hideously the fearful shadow of a natural discontent with civilization spreads over everything that we call "culture."

Murderers have always produced on me an impression of incorporated stupidity. And however clean the outward attire of a murderer, one cannot but distrust his physical cleanliness.

The first murderer I ever met lived in Kazan, in the suburbs, on the Back-Wet Street; his name was Nazar. He was an old man of sixty-seven, tall and stooping, with a large flat face framed in an immense white beard; his nose was broad -- without thickness -- and his arms reached almost to his knees; in a way he recalled a monkey, but his watery blue eyes shone with childish limpidity and in the manner of his speech, in the very words he used there was something childish, soft, and lisping. He had been a shepherd in youth, had turned out to be a zoo-maniac, and people then made him the butt of endless jibes. His uncle's family particularly outdid themselves in making fun of him, and on Peter and Paul's Day he murdered the entire family with the sharpened edge of a mowing-knife. The uncle, because "He shouldn't allow them to laugh;" his wife and brother "For laughing;" his niece, a nine-year-old child, "That she should keep quiet ;" a workman -- "He happened to be on the spot . . ."

He told the story himself to me and to a friend of mine, a student named Greimann -- told it with the smile of a man who recalls the biggest and most successful achievement of his life. He got whipped for it and was sentenced to twenty years' hard labour, ran away from the shafts, but after three months returned of his own accord, was whipped again, and received a "supplementary sentence."

"The bosses pitied me for my simplicity," he used to say. His sentence was shortened twice, for "good behaviour," but he was there twenty-three years in all, after which he lived on in Siberia a long time as a colonist. In Kazan he collected rags, bones, and iron to sell, and made from twenty-five to forty copecks a day. His only food was tea and barley-bread; of the latter he ate three or four pounds a day and drank about thirty glasses of insufferably hot tea. On Saturdays he would go to the public baths and sit in the steam till he fainted.

He limped, his right leg was sore. He would lift up the trouser to show Greimann a blue swelling on the knee and say: "Well, blackie, have a look, what's wrong with it?"

Greimann, a law-student, with a fastidious grimace, maintained that he was no doctor, but the old man would insist.

"Never mind, look at it! I've got no faith in them doctors and crooks -- but I've got faith in you. No matter that you are a Jew -- you've got a fine habit of always speaking the truth; whatever you say, it is the truth."

The man roused Greimann to a state of irritated amazement, almost of terror. The Jew's innate dislike of murder and blood made Nazar repellent to him, but youthful desire to "understand" him attracted us to the old criminal.

"How is it," we asked, "that you, so simple-hearted, could bring yourself to kill?"

He answered, full of self-importance:

"That I couldn't say. It's not my doing -- it's the devil's. I was a young fellow at the time, like you. I became simple with age." And he added sententiously :

"Youth, boys, is a dangerous thing. It's what ruined Adam, the righteous, in Paradise -- youth and that she-devil, Eve."

I was a boy of sixteen or seventeen at the time and naturally the old fellow was an amazement to me. More than that, as I remember well, I felt somehow flattered to be acquainted with such an uncommon personality -- with a murderer. But I remember quite as well that the self-importance with which the old man spoke of himself and of his crime -- the most considerable deed of his life -- made me indignant. Complacently stroking his beard with a thick reddish hand, he said:

"In those days our kind used to be treated with great ceremony: we were taken to the market-place and there, on a black scaffold some of us were whipped and some just exhibited, as much as to say: 'Look at them, people, and see what them villains are like' The bosses would read out a charter. . . ."

Of his life in the galleys Nazar spoke with great unconcern:

"Yes, life is pretty hard over there for any one who isn't used to it."

I never heard him complain and his attitude to men in general was as charitable and benevolent as that of a being of a higher order. I think it is from him that I first heard the characteristic Russian words: "Before the crime I lived as a shadow, then the

devil struck me, and I became conspicuous to myself as well as to others."

At the time I did not of course understand the significance of the words, but they fixed themselves in my memory and later on people that I came across, as well as examples of Russian literature, underscored and corroborated the pitiful and ugly truth: "Without sin, no repentance; without repentance, no salvation."

It seems to me now that it was precisely our curiosity that roused in the old man this pride in himself. Our inquisitiveness gave him weight in his own eyes. There is no doubt that newspaper gossip, sensational detective stories, and films, representing the agility and daring of murderers, develop in the unstabilized population which thirsts for sensations, an unwholesome curiosity about criminals and contribute to the growth of criminality. Criminologists also agree that this is the case. It is equally beyond doubt that these conditions combine to inspire murderers with a self-satisfied consciousness of their uniqueness.

We know that when a man feels himself the centre of attention he swells out prodigiously and seems to himself more weighty, more important than he really is. Our curiosity about people inflates them ; a possible explanation of the fact that our political and other heroes are so short-lived and burst so easily -- explaining equally, why in our desire to create a hero however small, all that we produce is a big fool.

The press, in its pursuit of sensation, undoubtedly deadens the sense of revulsion against murders and murderers even among the healthy elements of society. This anaesthetizing of natural sensitiveness can explain the unnatural cynicism, ghastly in its cold-bloodedness, with which people assist at an execution as though they were watching a play at the Grand Guignol.

The existence, by the way, as well as the success of that theatre clearly indicates that from a desire to divert themselves, people who are bored with life, are not trying any longer to conquer an unhealthy predilection for horrors. There is something revolting in this. No one could invent anything more horrible than actuality to-day; yet people rush to look at coarse artificial horrors that have no connexion with the real art of the stage.

Evil stares us in the face because we ourselves lend it importance by italicizing it. One's attention is called chiefly to facts of a negative rather than of a positive character -- this is an old and unalterable conviction of mine -- a conviction which has gradually been strengthened by observing that people are growing less and less human with regard to one another. This belief is not altered

moreover by the strange fact that the inhabitants of Nome, Alaska, were saved from death not by men, their fellow-creatures, but by a dog. The worst of it is that we call attention to evil not through a sense of revulsion, not out of physiological aestheticism, but from a petty curiosity almost criminal. And, of course, influenced by pharisaism.

In our attitude toward crime and evil, the instinct of self-preservation operates more feebly than any other. I particularly note the circumstance, but cannot understand it as compatible with egoism, the growth of which acquires every day a more hideous, a more monstrous shape and dimension.

It would be wiser and more hygienic to create an atmosphere of silence and unconsciousness around murderers -- an atmosphere in which there could be no place for active interest in their acts and personalities. In so far as I am a judge of human nature I know that the punishment I recommend is the cruelest. A man ceases to exist when he is not talked about. The most ghastly prison is the prison at /a belle étoile, the prison without walls or window bars, a Thébaïde without a god, without men. On the other hand, one should remember Edgar Allan Poe's wise remark: tell a scoundrel that he is a good man and he will justify your opinion.

I can't forget one or two ghastly impressions: a man who had suffered cruelly "for his fellow-creatures," a man kind in the free spontaneous Russian way, exceptionally pure of heart in the Russian way -- once designated a young fellow to me by a glance, then whispered in an almost pious undertone:

"It was he who killed the governor of N."

"He" was a fellow with the face of a regiment clerk; stub-nosed, with small colourless eyes, fleshy ears, and coarse bristling hair. He was standing at the window, looking patronizingly down at the people in the street, who were paddling along in the wet Petersburg mud under the afflictive rain of a swampy Finnish autumn. He had put his hands in his pockets and was chewing the stub of an extinguished cigarette.

The derogatory and perhaps not intelligent thought flashed across my brain: That sheepish ass feels just as self-satisfied as would a man who had accomplished something incontrovertibly important and good for mankind...

The explanation to all this is: "Political struggle," "Tyrannophobia," and so forth, and so forth. Yes, yes. Nevertheless, I ask when will men stop killing one another and stop making so much of murderers? Political murders are coming to be as num-

erous almost as ordinary ones.

Of the murderers I have met, two made the most unpleasant impression.

I was party to a consultation between my chief, A. J. Lanin, and one of his clients, a man who, after making his sister intoxicated, killed her by a blow on the head. He was a dealer in wild game. I don't remember his name -- Lukin, Lukianoff, or Luchin -- but I can see him now, every line of his body. He entered my superior's study with the independent carriage of a spoilt dog to whom all rooms of the house are equally accessible and familiar and who fears nothing and no one. He glanced at the corner and raised his hand to his forehead, but on seeing no ikon, smiled wisely and tolerantly and thrust his hand into his coat. The gesture at once attracted my attention, it was so wonderfully light, one would almost say -- immaterial. Then with very great dignity he inclined his head in the direction of Lanin who lay on the couch with a bad cold.

And in his further behaviour the murderer amazed me by just this benevolent dignity, as of a man who had generously conferred on his fellow-creatures, aside from professional profit, the gift of something uncommon, considerable, and valuable. He was not tall, was youthfully slender, and was wearing a tail coat and new shoes. His face was small and of a strange clay colour. From the temples to the chin and into the neck descended two streaks of straight black hair; on the chin and under it, merging in a thick beard that seemed cut out of black madder-oak. Although his jaw was short and the chin crowded back into the neck, the upper part of the face and high precipitous forehead protruded so oddly as to give an uncanny impression -- as of the man's face living miles in front of his body. His dark eyes were deep set, moist, and looked you straight in the face; running from the eyes to the temples were the little wrinkles of a smile that without lighting up the wooden face, remained congealed in the pupils; the mouth was hid, the brown skin seemed tight drawn over the bones of the face.

It was his smile that shone with the condescending benevolence of a man who has had thrilling experiences, is permeated with a sense of uniqueness, and seems to say: "You'd better listen; you may not be able to understand me, but don't fail to listen to me."

He had been five months in prison and was now out on bail from his godfather, the prison inspector. He was comfortably seated in an arm-chair in front of the sofa, his hands with their fat fingers folded on his knee; it was hard to believe that such clean, thoroughly washed hands had crushed a woman's skull. His head was inclined toward one shoulder, he sat in the attitude of

a watchful bird and spoke with my chief in an undertone, as he might have spoken to a carpenter whom he had engaged to make some repairs in the house. Of the seven witnesses questioned by the judge, five had described the murderer as a stingy, harsh-natured man, while the leader of the Church choir, his lodger and friend, made a very singular statement: I consider him a shallow man, not capable of committing a murder.

The porter of his house testified that "so far as you could see, there was no nonsense about his master." Three witnesses maintained that once before he had attempted to murder his sister -- throwing her into a cellar.

Smoothing his knees, the game-dealer adjured Lanin: "Cop. sider: entrée to one of the very richest houses is extended to me; I enter in the rôle of son-in-law and the deceased girl, don't you see -- invariably drunk -- disgraces me before the whole town, wailing that I've robbed her -- that I pocketed part of her inheritance, the three hundred roubles our father left us."

I think those were his exact words; I listened to the story very carefully and I have a good memory. He said "thoosand" instead of "thousand" and often used the word "dusk" -- having only just heard it apparently, for it was the one word he pronounced without assurance, in a half-enquiring tone.

"I gave her advice," he said. " 'Pelagia, don't come interfering with my life,' I said."

On the whole he did not talk, he "expressed himself" as is the habit of most "shallow" people who, as soon as they see their paltry fate smiling on them, become pompous, unnatural, and giving up simple speech, try to talk in aphorisms. A friend of mine, who sings in the Archbishop's choir, after getting a story published in a review, uttered this remark: "Yesterday the town heard how I sing, to-day the world will know how I think."

The game-dealer came to see his sister the day of the murder.

"With a firm soul, with a kind heart, believe me! 'Pelagia,' I said to her, 'a man should direct his steps to success and well-doing, not to disreputable living. Generously accept these three hundred roubles and forget about me. For God's sake, do!' She actually cried. I assure you, it was distressing. We had some tea with jam, and some Madeira wine -- after which she got drunk. It all happened -- I don't know just how -- you have to take into consideration that nothing but dusk ever came to me from her."

"In that case why did you take the hammer with you?" my chief enquired.

After a pause the man said, half enquiringly, half dubiously:
"If one admits the hammer, the premeditated action comes to the surface..."

My chief was a self-contained, kind-hearted man, but at these words he lost control of himself in a way quite unfamiliar to me and shouted at the murderer, concluding severely: "How dare you assume that your advocate could be accomplice of your crime!"

The murderer seemed in no way to resent this I thought and refused to be intimidated by the shouting. He merely looked a little startled and asked, "What did you say?" And when my senior repeated the words more calmly and distinctly the man rose and without trying to dissimulate, murmured, "In that case I must look for someone else. One should approach such matters only with a big heart, allow me to tell you."

He was defended by another lawyer -- with a big heart I suppose. At the trial one of the witnesses for the defence said of the murderer, "A tin soul."

Still more revolting was the painter M. who killed the well-known actor, Roshchin-Jusaroff. He fired at the back of the head while the actor was washing. He was tried and acquitted I believe, or received a mild sentence. Anyhow at the beginning of the century he was free, and endeavouring to express his notions of art in the domain of home industry -- in the potter's business if I am not mistaken. Somebody brought him to see me. Standing in my son's room I watched him -- a dark-haired man obviously satisfied with life; he was undressing in the ante-chamber, slowly, deliberately. Standing in front of the mirror he first brushed back his hair and lent his face a dreamy expression. But this seemed unsatisfactory to him and he ruffled his hair, puckered up his eyebrows, drew down the corners of his mouth, and made his face the picture of grief. As he shook hands with me his face had acquired a third aspect -- that of a boy who, remembering that yesterday he had misbehaved, considers his punishment excessive and expects unusual sympathy and attention. He had resolved "to serve the people, to devote all his life to them, all his talent."

"Private life, of course, no longer exists for me -- I'm a man with a broken heart. I loved that woman madly. . ."

His broken heart had lodged itself in a well-fed body, and -- dressed itself in a brand-new suit of modern cut and tiresome colour.

"Yes," he said, "one must do one's best to 'sow what is wise, kind, and eternal,' as Nikolai Nekrassoff has enjoined us to."

After Nikolai Nekrassoff, he recalled Feodor Dostoevsky and asked if I liked Feodor?

"No, I don't care much for Feodor," I said.

Then he genially and emphatically reminded me that Feodor Dostoevsky was admittedly a deep psychologist, but that personally he, M., shared the critical judgement of N. Michailovsky.

"Without a doubt his is a cruel talent."

It seemed to me to give the man peculiar pleasure to speak of these authors, calling them by their Christian names: Nikolai, Feodor, Leon, as if they were employees in his service. He mentioned Shakespeare, speaking of him too in a friendly intimate way, as William.

A little later he said that *Crime and Punishment* was "in the main an unwholesome book -- amounting to this: it is a crime to kill a man, but if you want inside knowledge, you must kill -- even if it's only some old hag." Those were his exact words, "inside knowledge," and this was the cleverest remark and the most impudent he made in two hours. It seemed to me somehow out of place, as if he had plagiarized it and in making it realized that he had come on a thought a little out of the ordinary. He blew his cheeks out and fastened his dark eyes on me triumphantly, the whites of which were diversified by tiny pink veins. After this he was overwhelmed with humanitarianism! Catching sight of a siskin and a linnet in their cages on the window, he embarked on a lyrical speech about how painful it was to see caged birds. Then gulping down a glass of vodka and eating pickled mushrooms on top of it, he pompously enlarged on his love of nature, using cheap hackneyed words. And after that -- complained of the newspapers.

"What bothered me most was the hue and cry the papers raised. They were simply full of the thing! Would you care to have a look?" He pulled from the side-pocket of his coat a thick little book full of cuttings. "Perhaps you would care to make use of them?" he said. "Murder because of jealousy's a subject that would make you a fine novel."

I told him I did not know how to write fine novels. Clapping his book down, on the palm of his hand, he went on with a sigh: "I could tell you a great many interesting things ;" and added: "An interesting milieu -- artists and actors, a fascinating woman . . ."

His arms were short in comparison with his body, he had the stunted fingers of all ungifted people, and his lower lip reminded one of a leech -- a crimson one such as nature does not know.

LOVE ON AIR

BY MICHAEL PRISHVIN

Translated From the Russian by Marie Budberg

MY friend, when you love a woman, prayers are powerless -- you cannot murmur them morning, day, and night and gradually obtain your wish; no effort, no talent will give you your beloved, if Nature -- in this independent of us -- decides otherwise. Futile are all prayers in love, however fervent, causing pearls of blood to stand out on one's forehead or such as would strip naked a mountain of stone with all the precious treasures concealed in its depths. Not a hair will those prayers cause to stir on the head of your heart's desire, not even in her sleep will they reach her; there is no fervent prayer in matters of love; all is in vain -- if, as one says, fate is against you.

I remember Grisha, when he came to our veranda to play on the reed-pipes with horns.

At that time I was so small that not only did I ignore all that concerned love, but even the movement of the fingers of the clock was a mystery to me. I am afraid to say for sure whether I was two years old, certainly not more than three. We lived in a small brick house with an iron balcony. In that quiet street a lace-woman worked in every house and through the open windows the peculiar melodious sounds of maple bobbins came continually streaming in. Only now, many, many years later, do I gather all the meaning of these sounds in our street. Just as real stillness is always deeper if an indefatigable cricket is to be heard in it, so does an unobserved man, filled with a tremulous energy, appear to me in our modest street when I bring back to my memory the sound of maple bobbins under the touch of girlish fingers and I say to myself: A man is a man, wherever he may be.

Every morning Grisha came to our balcony and played on his reed-pipes. It was a joy to listen to him, but I did not know then all the meaning of his music. We received copper pennies that we threw into his hat from the balcony. He bowed and turned round the corner, going further and further away, and went on playing and we listened and listened until no other sound remained in our street but that of the lonesome maple bobbins.

I do not know -- maybe I never would have perceived the prayer of love in those sounds, if the melody had not once been broken of by brute force: one day, as Grisha was playing, a policeman came up to him, seized him by the scruff of the neck, and led him away

for ever. I remember very well the presentiment that Grisha had been driven away for ever. For several days we still came out on the balcony, still waited, but the presentiment of the end had not betrayed us: the music disappeared for ever and queerly enough it so happened that I -- wandering as I did all over the land -- never again came to hear the music of reed-pipes.

When Grisha had been led away for ever and his music ceased, I understood it. No one of the elders ever guessed, however, why I remained awake every night, sobbing: I was sorry for Grisha and it was for him that I shed tears in the dark.

Later on, when I began to understand everything, many times was the story of Grisha's love repeated to me; for years that short little story turned to me now its sorrowful, now its comical side. Only no one ever shared my feelings about it -- I concealed them preciousely ; everyone laughed -- not a soul felt as I did and even my brother who had listened with me to the music and sorrowed for it with me, had forgotten all about it. The old nurse, who used to come out with us on the balcony to hear Grisha's tunes, did not remember how the policeman led Grisha away under her very eyes and to my question: "What had Grisha done to make the policeman drag him away ?" -- answered indifferently :

"Probably been up to something."

I remained all my life alone with this event, so unimportant to all and it had so deeply moved my three-year-old heart that it seems to me I can reconstruct a stranger's tale of a comical love as though I had been a witness of it, almost a participant in this romance "on air", so comical to all.

He sang tenor in the right pew of the Cathedral. In the left pew sang the girls from the orphanage and with them the grown-up daughter of the Cathedral Priest, Father Potamij Makhoff. It was ground for continual jesting in the town, a kind of local anecdote, that the Cathedral Priest, Father Hippo-Potamij, had christened his daughter Muse. Grisha, a street musician, fell in love with this perfectly inaccessible priest's daughter and made her -- his muse. He was so simple that he spoke to somebody of his love and it reached the ears of our shopkeepers, ever ready to turn everything to ridicule. They laughed at him: not even the last laundry-girl of the town, Fesha Samskaia, would ever think of marrying such a ragamuffin -- much less the daughter of the Cathedral protopope Makhoff! Grisha opened wide his eyes, stared, and told the merchants:

"I have no wish for that!"

"Liar," said the men, "are you fond of sunflower-seeds?"

Grisha answered simple-heartedly : "Yes, sunflower-seeds I like."

And they: "Well, if you like them -- you nibble at them."

But Grisha protested indignantly and one day said:

"I love, 'on air.' "

And from then on it went all over the town: Grisha has fallen in love "on air" with the Cathedral Priest's daughter, Muse. Schoolboys and schoolgirls transformed the usual denomination for love as platonic into love "on air." Street-boys followed Grisha in crowds and teased him to death.

But the chief amusement began when Grisha made up his mind to write to his Muse and changed his name in the letters from Otrezkov to Otrepieff, most probably by way of self-adornment, thinking of Gregory the Impostor's love for Marina Mnichek, the beautiful Pole. At first he signed his letters: "Gregory Otrepieff, whom you know."

Soon after, Muse married the deacon Fortificatoff and went to Lebedian. Grisha wrote to Lebedian, to the Priest's wife Muse Fortificatoff, but these letters he now signed: "Gregory Otrepieff, who was."

The letters, after circulating in Lebedian, returned to the Cathedral pope and passed from hand to hand in our town. Everybody rolled with laughter and schoolboys in those times signed their love-letters: ""Yours whom you know" or "Yours who was."

Grisha's last letter did not reach its destination but was treasured by the porter of the Orlov Hotel and he often produced it for the amusement of the clients who tipped him well. The last letter from the romance on air was addressed not to Muse Fortificatoff, but to the Holy Virgin Mary and was signed, neither "whom you know," nor "who was" -- but quite in a new way:

"Gregory, who will be."

My friend, the music of the reed-pipes with horns was beautiful ; I cannot forget it. It was the great prayer of love, although I know: all prayers are powerless when you love a woman.

THE HOUSE
BY STERLING NORTH

Surely the walls and rafters make
Slight armour from the gusty night,
And it were best to stay awake

And keep a light.

And it were surely best to close

The door, and heed the creaking stair,
Nor look above your frail house
Where constellations hang on air.

And it were best to keep from doubt
That fills the fast encircling gloom
Lest wind should puff your candle out
And fill the room...

Lest sudden stars about you burn

The walls come crashing on your head
And in your madness you should learn
The slow confusion of the dead.

TRINIDAD

BY ARTHUR A. YOUNG

WE were now in rough water -- blue -- under a sky of lavender,
and as I sighted a shoal of jewel-like fish I wondered if the
spot could once have witnessed bloodshed, looting, torture, in
Elizabethan days, and thought of Frobisher, Hawkins, and Drake.
But my mind reverted quickly to the twenty-four hours previous in
which I had suddenly decided to leave Trinidad, and as I thought
of childhood days in Arima, my spirits drooped.

Only yesterday my coolie cabman had driven me along the old
road on one side of which ran the iron railing of our emerald
savannah. In front of the houses and the shadowed porches with
their lattice of honeysuckle vines, the gardens were a mass of
bloom -- hedges of scarlet hibiscus, fences turning pink with
coralita, cabbage palms rising like noble columns, the fragrance of
geranium suffusing all, the evening glory spent and sleeping.

I had driven many times to our old Nest at the edge of town, in the same cab, pulled by the same horse, past the same scenes, and when the cabman found it was my good-by visit he said, "Mas-sah, I drive you free," cracked his whip, and the old mare responded briskly.

The short twilight had almost merged with night, and glowing patches of crimson fused with blue, were visible behind the green drapery of trees -- recalling to me my first sunset in the tropics and the swift change from crimson to yellow, from pale blue to brown and silver.

As we climbed the hill we saw against the twinkling lights of the town, the grey of the municipal grand-stand -- a shadow, sleeping now, but on Santa Rosa Day a miniature Deauville. Santa Rosa race day, near the end of August, was the day of days in this West Indian town. Coconut thatched huts sprang up, cabs and cabmen jostled one another, all trails, all trains ran thither. A hillside town, Arima was transformed in one night to a tumultuous Main Street. Hindu jewellery clicked and glittered, turbans towered above the crowd, rainbow ties flew from every male bosom.

Babies were tugging at breasts, there was a stentorian shouting of programs, street-organs were squealing, and added to the noise was the steady hum of the Monte Carlo wheels. Card-fakirs were vociferous. The hard-up labourer surprised you with his liberality, Wherever you turned it was "Let's have a drink."

Recalling Santa Rosa race day in Arima, I can think of no occasion which so brings together the typical West Indian populace. Trinidad is cosmopolite. When Columbus landed in 1492 he found a race identical with the Indians of the interior of Guiana and neighbouring parts of South America. The Carib, the original native, has disappeared, and in his place have come the English, French, Spanish, the negro, the coolie.

On a Santa Rosa Day you saw them at their best; Hindus -- exquisitely chiselled -- smoking cheroot pipes, and Hindu women with nose-rings over their lips, gold bracelets from wrist to elbow, their ears weighted with ear-rings. You saw the gaudy turbans and bandannas of creole ladies, and negro women with a short train of three or four feet tied below the hip with a piece of string.

I had little sleep that night of my return home, and kept thinking of times I had enjoyed in Arima.

"You won't know us when you come back, will you?" the smallest of the family ventured. "B will miss Latin verbs. And who will read out passages from Homer and Virgil when you are away?"

I assured her I never would forget Arima and that I would drop Homer and Virgil as soon as I arrived in Boston.

Not far from the house was the river, and a factory where ice was made by water power. Below the falls was a blue basin. When a boy, how many times I had splashed in the cascading water, wandering up the stream with the other boys, against the rippling current, in bathing trunks, each with his clothes in a bundle on his head -- wading, and fishing for sardines that skittered through the crystal water, or looking under rocks for "crebiches," hearing sometimes the resonant boom of the trumpet-fish, while the hollow bamboo stems crackled against each other and the leaves swished and sang in the wind.

The gorgeousness of tropical life hemmed you in. Tiny blossoms advanced from ledges of evergreen, the plantain and the silvery fronds of the banana bush glittered in the sun. You heard the call of the campanella, the song of the kis-ka-dee, and the distant cooing of the dove -- now and then passing a barrier of brush beyond which loomed a forest luxuriant with spiny palms criss-crossing from branch to branch. Maidenhair ferns and bouquets of orchids swayed from the arm of a giant tree and overhead a sky-blue Emperor winged his way in the shadows.

I used to watch processions of donkeys and mules pass our door on their way to the woods, up the mountain. The small strong asses had each a "sillon" on its back, from which an empty pannier bounced against the sides of the slim-footed animal. Sometimes a boy would be in one basket and provisions in the other. The master -- with a double-barrelled gun over his shoulder, a cutlass hanging from his belt, and his dog behind -- followed on foot or mule-back. The sight always reminded me of Robinson Crusoe.

Tobago, an island twenty miles north of Trinidad, was the scene of Crusoe's shipwreck. A belief that it was Juan Fernandez off the southwest coast of South America, is due to the fact that Defoe is relating in Robinson Crusoe, the adventures of Alexander Selkirk who lived on Juan Fernandez four years.

A pebble's throw away is Little Tobago, an Eden for birds of paradise. After sunrise, and once again before sunset, you hear cawing -- a kind of incoherent chatter -- and see the birds strutting from branch to branch, the males on one branch, in their brilliant tufts resembling Scottish guards; the females on another, as spectators apparently. One bird toddles in a snake-like dance, jumping up and down, the others imitating him, heads bowed, tails spread, wings opening and closing in an animated rhythm. Somersaults follow. The birds then depart in pairs, to the woods, returning before sunset to repeat the performance.

Once, as escort and protector, I accompanied my mother to our cocoa plantation. We travelled by rail from Arima as far inland as possible, then by buggy, then by donkey, then on foot. Cocoa-trees with green pods bunched against the trunks, were before, behind, on either side. Then we came to a bend in the Oropuche River, an expanse of water that took my breath away the first time I saw it.

It was here we changed to other clothes, for the tramp into the interior. My mother tucked up her dress, and with her heavy bluchers and old cork hat, looked quite in character with the expedition, while I, in old pants, high-heeled leggings, and a broad-brimmed sombrero, with a cutlass in hand and pannier slung over my shoulder, challenged the woods in true Don Quixote fashion.

Further glimpses of the cocoa plantation: labourers picking the ripe pods from the trees; coolie women with baskets gathering the fruit as it fell; heaps of cocoa pods along the way. Now and then we would cross a stream. A splotch of forest. We heard the flight of bats, the call of the toucan, the chatter of parrots, we would see a yellow-breasted kis-ka-dee catching insects among the wild flowers, multi-coloured butterflies, humming-birds of ruby and topaz. Then silence -- the great trees overhead like a canopy of foliage, festooned with networks of lianas, enveloping us with mysterious stillness.

On we went, picking up the thin sunlit trail again. The few people we encountered were Spanish overseers or creole planters, but when we met there was always a greeting in patois. Birds would strut before us, chirp or sing, then fly into the woods -- the voices of the wood becoming hushed as we approached. But the whispering continued, on and on and on.

At the fringe of the estate we would be met by the Spanish overseer and his wife and to the melodious accompaniment of patois would make our way to the plantation house on the crest of a little hill. Here the wind was strong and we could see below us the golden flowers of the bois immortelle -- planted to shield the cocoa-trees from the sun -- a flaming sea under the bright blue sky. Around the house was a vegetable patch of dasheen, tanis, yams, sweet potatoes, cassava, and fruit-trees -- literally an orchard; among them a tall kymeet or star-apple-tree, and back of an old well, a pomerac or West Indian pear-tree, its russet blossoms transforming the ground into a carpet of rose and gold, the fruit tumbling from green to red, to blood red, to purple. Every morning we heard the excited jargon of a flock of green and crimson parrots as it made its excursion to the fields, flying in massed formation, a band of a hundred or more.

When on visits to the plantation I liked to idle in a hammock. Near the house, between a mango and a cocoanut-tree I would sling my hammock, and poised in air between the living trunks that lifted high into the heavens, would listen to the grandest of tropical music, the wind playing as it seemed a harp in the jalousie of cocoanut leaves, while the semps and kis-ka-dees carolled as they feasted on ripe mangoes.

I was bookish in those days and when I went to the estate, would always throw into my knapsack three or four favourite volumes, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* perhaps, or *Endymion*, or *Confessions of an Opium Eater*. In the afternoons when the heat was at its height I would lie in the hammock book in hand -- as it were in another world. It was here I read my first book of Dickens, became acquainted with Stevenson, and memorized parts of De Quincey; and studied Virgil, Tacitus, Homer, and Shakespeare, when I was a student at St Mary's in the city and was spending my vacations on the estate.

Sometimes after reading an enchanting passage I would drop the book and look over the hill. The crimson of the immortelle trees lent stimulus to my imagination and I would see Rosalind and Orlando plighting their troth. Continuously overhead the cocoanut leaves made music -- changing from the gurgle of a brook to the drip, drip, drip of tropical rain; and I would see Puck and Ariel in shadowy flight among the branches.

I recalled -- on this night of my return to Arima -- my first attempt to spend the night in a hammock. It was moonlight. All afternoon I had been flying a kite, and as darkness came on decided to view its manoeuvres from the curtains of my hammock. The moon threw fantastic shadows upon me from the cocoanut fronds and the dark globular mango-trees overshadowing me seemed like guardians of the night. I had told my mother I was going to sleep in the hammock.

A thousand-fold aware of the mysteries of forest life -- the moan and whine of unseen things, the hum of mosquitoes, the music of crapauds, the cry of crickets -- I saw shadows like human forms moving behind the trees and little balls of green flame flitting now here, now there. I looked at the house, drowned in stillness and sleep.

The moon was behind clouds and did not emerge for a long time. A wind blew and I heard the tock, tock, tock, of mangoes falling and rolling down the hill. Ghostly -- like the stories of West Indian jumbies. I wondered if the little balls of green flame were soucouyans, that is to say women blood-suckers, in search of victims, and I detected the voice of the lugahoo (the werewolf). The shadows of the swaying banana leaves resembled a human being --

"Papa bois," I let myself fancy, whose duty in West Indian folklore is to appear to hunters and demand the reason for their presence.

I heard my mother's voice: "Aren't you coming in to sleep?" and I responded that I was. Midsummer night in Arima.

A breeze was blowing and there was a trail of smoke from the funnel of the ship as we left the yellow waters of The Orinoco and glided into the sapphire of the ocean. I had climbed the bridge to catch a last glimpse of houses and shore. All was becoming indistinguishable -- a mere blank. In the background lofty mountains climbed into the sky and I could distinguish the three which Columbus saw from the deck of the Santa Maria on his third voyage in 1498 and named in fulfilment of his vow, Trinidad -- that is to say, Trinity.

THE MERMEN

BY HART CRANE

Thy banished trunk be found in our dominions
King Lear

Buddhas and engines serve us undersea.

Though why they bide here only hell, that's sacked
Of every blight and ingenuity --

Can solve.

The Cross alone has flown the wave.
But since the Cross sank, much that's warped and cracked
Has followed in its name, has heaped its grave.

Oh --

Gallows and guillotines to hail the sun
And smoking racks for penance when day's done!
No --

Leave us, you idols of Futurity -- alone,

Here where we finger molders of spent grace
And ponder the bright stains that starred this Throne,
-- This Cross, agleam still with a human Face!

TOLSTOY
1828-1928
BY ALEXANDER KAUN

TOLSTOY was not a Tolstoyan.

Herein, delightful and multiple contradictions. Otherwise, how stiffly Olympian, how doctrinaire a Puritan the later Tolstoy would seem!

A disciple once proposed as an ideal, a lonely island peopled by Simon Pure Tolstoyans. The "teacher" replied that he would find such perfection intolerable.

In his "official" declarations Tolstoy adhered rigidly to the faith which he embraced at the age of fifty. Rigidly, uncompromisingly. Dostoevsky, in speaking of the author of *Anna Karénin*, compared him to a stolid bull who cannot turn his neck without shifting his whole body. Self-perfection. Simplification. Non-resistance. The tenets, and all their consequences. No deviation. Jusqu'au bout.

"Officially" all was well. Consistent.

Incessant self-perfection, self-analysis. Weighing and measuring every emotion, every action. Recording in the diary. In the big diary, for the public. In the little note-books, kept under the pillow, for himself and the two or three intimates.

Simplification to the point of peasant blouses; boot-making; carpentry; work in the field; vegetarianism; renunciation of personal property. Rejection of all art, his own works included, save that which can be understood by the common people.

Non-resistance -- a passive anarchism. Non-recognition of coercion, of the state, of social institutions and observances. Denial of violence -- of war, capital punishment, revolutionary activities. Even in self-defence? Even in self-defence. If a Zulu should break into your home, kill before your eyes your wife and children -- would you resist? Momentary silence. Swift pallor. No, I should not resist!

The "unofficial" Tolstoy.

The incurable aristocrat proud of his pure blood, of his descent from St Michael, Prince of Chernigov. The fastidious gentleman contemptuous of plebeianism which he may find even in Turgenev's "democratic thighs." The "inconsistent count," as he is branded by the drab multitude of "followers" who come to test his haughty humility. Most of them use the backstairs; the Countess sees to that.

The incurable pagan, passionately responsive to flesh, to form, to animal strength, to earthly voices and the calls of nature. The sensual Tolstoy, whose straight talk brings a blush to the cheeks of a man with a hide as tough as Maxim Gorki's. The keen appraiser of "immoral," unmoral art. At the partly open door of his study he surreptitiously listens to Goldenweiser playing Chopin for the Family -- is enraptured.

The lonely one. To the end, not one soul congenial. Surely not the parchment-arid Chertkov, arch-priest of pure Tolstoyanism. Nor his daughter Alexandra, the only "loyal" member of the Family. Both Chertkov and Alexandra reproached the master for his inconsistencies, for his elasticity toward the Countess, his spiritual enemy. The Countess was probably the only one who understood him, her great contradictory baby. But a chasm lay between husband and wife. A spiritual chasm, made ever broader and deeper by those intimate disciples, plus Tolstotstes que Tolstoi même. That agony of solitude in the dying, febrile eyes -- at the absurd little station of Astapovo! Poor fugitive from the "roof of lies," vainly trying at the age of eighty-two, to be consistent.

The doubter. A faith arduously wooed and won saved him from the "tempting rope." Yet the caverns of his scepticism were never filled. Those little note-books under the pillow -- outlet for the never quiescent, never complacent spirit of self-analysis. Terribly honest with himself, he could not claim the peace of certitude.

Assuredly Tolstoy the artist was not a Tolstoyan.

In the light of his numerous spokesmen, those thinly veiled self-portraits, was there ever a more egocentric writer? The Irtenyevs, Olenins, Bezukhovs, Bolkonskys, Levins, Nekhludovs . . . in his own image he created them. With his own traits and qualities and frailties and doubts and relentless quests. Has he given us one single positive Tolstoyan? One character after his own heart -- as that doubter Dostoevsky did in *The Idiot*? He has not.

His seekers are pitiable. Clumsy, verbose, inconsequential. That young alter ego of Tolstoy, Olenin -- what a pale, flaccid, futile dullard, by the side of the robust Cossacks! How pitiful

the would-be-Christian, Olenin, face to face with the magnificent Pagan, Eroshka! Pierre Bezukhov is lovable as an awkward, near-sighted, stooping bear, but how tedious when he has been infected with the Tolstoyan virus and waxes introspective. Compared with the splendid animal, Count Vronsky, the Tolstoyan Levin is a depressing bore. The chapters on his tortuous quest and conversion form the most anaemic part of Anna Karénin. As to Nekhludov, in Resurrection, he is a débacle. One must be naive not to realize the irony and the bitterness in the title of this novel, the last to appear in its author's lifetime. Nekhludov's effort to be Tolstoyan makes him ridiculous and repellent not only to the convicted prostitute, Katyusha Maslova. In his unfinished play, Light Shineth in Darkness, Tolstoy exhibits without pity for himself the baneful effect of his conversion on all who come near him. Bernard Shaw sees in the plot "the transfiguration of the great prophet into a clumsy mischievous cruel fool."

Potent contradictions. How much nearer and more precious he is to us because of his failure to attain perfection. Because of the indecisive battle between Dionysus and Christ, perpetually waged in the arena of his fearless mind. Because of the frequent triumph of his sense of proportion over his sense of righteousness. Because of the immeasurable superiority of Tolstoy the artist over Tolstoy the preacher.

FINALE

BY HOWARD HAYES

ALL day he had failed, just as he had failed all the day before, and the day before that, and weeks back. In the morning he looked through the want ads, perhaps checked two or three, even looked them up.

But this morning as he sat at his ten-cent breakfast and looked at those want ads he knew positively that none were for him, and he knew, or felt with a deep aching sureness that to-day, this very day, was his last. He couldn't hold out any longer.

Except for neglect of the want ads his routine for the morning was as usual. He made two or three calls in which he seemed above his average of cheerfulness, snappiness, and that self-assurance which employers want. With his ten-cent breakfast under his belt he made the rounds of the office buildings. All morning. Up and down in fast elevators. Weeks ago he felt one emotion when going up in an elevator to an office where he would ask for work, and a different emotion coming down. But for several mornings now he had felt exactly the same on both trips no matter

what had occurred.

In spite of himself he rather enjoyed the novelty -- the way in which failure, a cold shoulder, a glassy eye, insidious questions as to how long he had been out of work and why, left him utterly unaffected. He concluded that he must have attained a sort of Nirvana -- since things which had caused him so much pain a few weeks (or was it months) ago, had lost their sting so completely. He believed that he could, like a Yogi, lie on a board of upturned spikes without discomfort. It would be interesting to try.

During the noon hour he made the rounds of several employment agencies at which he was still registered. A long time ago he had told them that he would take anything they could get for him. But he wasn't strong enough for heavy manual labour. It had been a mistake to say he would take anything; they had no respect

for him now. 'They wished he wouldn't come in any more, although they didn't say so. These hardened employment experts were working against odds themselves and for a fellow to come in day after day had a cumulatively depressant effect upon them. They treated him with augmented wolfishness. They couldn't get him anything and he and they both knew it. If things didn't soon take a turn for the better they wouldn't be much better off than he was.

At about one, he had a bowl of soup and a hamburger sandwich on rye in a near-beer saloon; then sat in the park until one-fifteen, reading an afternoon paper. He always bought a paper because he hated to read the wadded up ones that others had left on the park benches. His must be fresh and neatly folded. Anyhow, what difference could two cents make?

There was always escape in reading a paper, especially the foreign news. The little items on the inside pages, the date-lines with names beside them -- London, Berlin, Paris, Glasgow, Constantinople, Moscow, Shanghai, Calcutta, Rangoon -- had a queer fascination for him.

As he read, the warm autumn sunshine slowly penetrated the thick shoulders of his coat. It was like wine in his blood, this added warmth, and made up a little for the cold numbness in his stomach.

After reading most of the little items in the paper he looked at the clock in the church-tower across the park. It said one-fifteen, the time when he roused himself usually to start on his afternoon rounds. But to-day he took his eyes from the clock without a single accompanying bodily movement. Fluttering pigeons drew his eyes

and he watched them, transfixed. Dumb, noisy, silly things, these pigeons! What bright senseless eyes!

Again he looked at the clock-tower; if he was going to look for work he should start now; it was twenty minutes after one. If he didn't get up he ought to look through the want ads -- the reason he always bought a paper he told himself. His eyes left the pigeons and travelled nearer -- to his chest and abdomen. They were rising and falling automatically. How regular and unconscious was the working of these blind mechanisms; after so much neglect too. Would that rhythmic rise and fall go on for ever?

When he next looked at the church-clock it was three minutes after two. Involuntarily a movement went through him; he almost roused himself from his slumped down posture. But as incentive came, it was as suddenly gone. The clock said two-fourteen. With a rush he got to his feet, but dizziness gripped him and he felt with one hand for the back of the bench. When he started across the park the clock said two-seventeen. His pace was almost brisk as he followed the curving walks toward the business district...

Not many persons can understand how a man long hungry can spend his last dollar for liquor instead of food. It's queer. A down-and-outer would rather be drunk and hungry than not so hungry and still have his wits about him. Drunkenness is the pearl of great price -- had at the sacrifice of something else, usually food. Rich men can have full stomachs and be drunk too, but a bum must choose between liquor and food.

In the blind pig was a jar of salted peanuts. He ate two or three handfuls. After he had bought several drinks the bartender trusted him for a few. Bartenders don't usually do that.

Later, on the street he stepped along easily, turning corners briskly left and right, seemingly with a purpose. Block after block he went, until he was striding down the widest busiest street. Evening had come on and the brilliant red and blue of the gas signs danced before his eyes. Beautiful. His stomach was warm now and there was a pleasant mistiness in his head. Every muscle was limber yet surprisingly strong. As he walked along the wide street past the bright shop-windows, he felt like a ship at sea ploughing through rollers. He did not have to dodge the people streaming toward him; he could hold a straight course and the oncoming waves of humanity would break to right and left of him. A few bumps didn't matter. Dense masses melted before him as he ploughed on.

Ahead was the park, the rows of benches edging the walks were inviting, and heedless of the crowd he set his course toward them.

There was a wide street to cross and at the corner, in the middle of the rushing traffic, a little tower flashed red and green and amber lights. You usually crossed the street with the green lights; he could remember such things somewhere a long time ago, but they seemed unimportant now. He could see all of a red light and about a third of a green one. Good enough. Stepping down off the curb he started across. An auto fender brushed his leg and someone yelled.

No one could be yelling at him, he didn't know any one in this damned city who would yell at him. He ploughed on without looking to right or left. A big ship ploughing through a rough sea, everything before it only waves to be gone through. Automobile brakes screeched and someone shouted. What did it matter? It wasn't for him, when they'd been talking to him so carelessly for weeks.

The pigeons that had been walking in the sun were gone. Where had they gone? Home? Probably. Yesterday his landlady had made him give up the key to the house and had set his travelling-bag and cardboard suitcase on the porch. Had thrown them there.

He sat with his head lowered so that all he could see was a procession of feet and ankles on the pavement. Simpering little feet connected with silken ankles hurrying to keep up with light brown shoes lost under floppy pants. Some fellow and his girl going to the movies.

Strong stuff, that whiskey. It wasn't whiskey, it was hootch. For an instant his head seemed to snap and turn over. But it wasn't a bad feeling. He slapped his leg, pinched it -- couldn't hurt it.

Minutes passed, perhaps twenty-five or thirty. Now he was walking again, and thinking. Walking is all right, but thinking grows on you. Numbness too. A sensation of protectedness seeped up to his brain. It kept the world from him. Such a safe, warm feeling.

He navigated several street-crossings, usually with the traffic, feeling that he was following his own whim. A broad avenue with two streams of darting, fluid, two-eyed animals lay ahead of him. Some were silent, some honked angrily. Between the two swift streams was a safety-zone made by stubby steel posts set in the pavement. In the enclosure people were gathered. They huddled together and paid no attention to him as he stood there gripping the cap of one of the posts. Street-cars stopped and took the crowds away so more could accumulate. Amusedly he watched the crowds scramble and push to get on the cars. What a hurry to go somewhere. Now and again his head did queer things and turned

over as when you are swimming under water. He turned away from the cars and the crowd, to the endless flow of gleaming eyes, The big shiny cars made little noise. Sometimes the fluctuating stream was nearly solid; again it would thin suddenly.

The head-lamps -- pairs of bright eyes -- flowed by in a rhythmic flood. He tried to look away, but his fascinated eyes returned constantly to watch a pair of lights rush at him, grow monstrous, swish by two feet away. A simple solution. Even now he felt nothing, neither his feet nor the hand which clung to the top of the post. He kicked the post; there was a dead foot in his shoe, He wouldn't feel the fall -- or the impact of the body back of those bright eyes. Lean forward and let go; that would be all.

Already he could imagine himself on the pavement, comfortable and numb. Dead without feeling it; dead because he wanted to lie down...He let his fingers loosen a little, swayed pleasantly -- Which pair of eyes? Not this one; not the next one. Easy, so easy. He let his eyes shut. End it all, end it all. No monkey business.

Slowly, easily, his fingers loosened their grip. The cars were ceaseless, the bright eyes whirring past within two feet. This one. The two bright lamps come swiftly -- straight at him. He is slipping. Through the air -- the hand that gripped the post stretched out behind. On come the big lamps; they swerve, but not enough. One eye veers; the other is upon him, bigger, bigger. Light, light. Crash. He has fallen into the face of the sun, he has broken the face of the sun. It is glass.

FROM THE CULTURAL FRONT IN RUSSIA

by BRENT DOW ALLINSON

THE departure of what is possibly the most distinguished company of American specialists that has yet visited Soviet Russia -- educators, presidents of educational institutions, psychologists, and philosophers, with John Dewey as chief representative -- draws our attention again to Moscow and the new régime which in the name of the world's proletariat now rules a tenth of the world's population. Upon arriving in the Red capital, the delegates were officially received by Anatol Lunacharsky, Soviet Commissar of Popular Enlightenment as his title reads. They are now devoting their time to a study of Soviet schools and educational methods in both city and country. They are visiting evening classes for adults and the special "workers' faculties" -- in Communist nomenclature, "Rabfaks" -- which have been established in connexion with many high schools and technical institutes, and some of the ten thousand or more "cultural outposts" and cottage

reading-rooms from which Soviet literature and propaganda are distributed, in which, more or less regularly, classes are conducted for "the liquidation of illiteracy," and peasant men and women are taught to read and write, to spell, to figure, and to believe in the unsleeping beneficence of the Party and its energetic Directorate.

Education in Soviet Russia seeks not so much to provide free development for the individual -- to "release the imprisoned splendour from within," of which Browning speaks -- as to convert him emotionally and intellectually to the Marxian gospel of salvation, to permeate the child from infancy with "the consciousness of the Revolution" and of the working-class, with a feeling for Proletarianism and a conviction of the authoritarian economic, social, and political idea. This idea is sovereign in Bolshevist Russia -- more important than the idea of self-fulfilment, of race, of patriotism, of prosperity, or of God.

Not long ago the present writer chanced to meet and interview The Idea in Moscow, in the persons of several eminent Bolsheviks, among them, Comrade Lunacharsky.

I was standing in a large hall where a special collection of paintings and sculpture had been assembled from widely scattered parts of the empire. Upon one wall hung a number of clear, cold water-colours, the work of a hunter living on the coast of Novaya Zembyla within the Arctic Circle; they were landscapes, and sea-scapes fringed with ice-bergs. Considering that the painter was a trapper, not an art student, they were very well done. There were portraits in oil of Circassian women and warriors, or mountaineers, in dagger-decorated burkas; they looked like Italian primitives -- more primitive even -- and were the work of a Transcaspian. Several charming woodcuts of peasant faces and scenes by an unknown Ukrainian artist aroused my admiration. But on the whole the statuary exhibited more striking talent and skill than the paintings. In the lobby, carved in wood, towered the figure of a peasant-woman, arms akimbo, kerchief over her head, straddling the furrows, vivid as life. The centre of the main hall was occupied by an heroic group of male figures in white plaster, nude, and bowed, bearing on their shoulders a pallet or bier on which, under sweeping drapery, lay Lenin, in the sleep of death. Of classic conception and noble solemnity the group was entitled simply, Burial of Lenin; it was the work of Merkurof, a sculptor who had achieved fame before the Revolution. The Government Art Commission, which is virtually the sole patron of all the fine arts in Russia, had ordered it especially for this decennial jubilee exposition.

As I lingered, admiring it, I realized that a guard was clearing the hall of its few visitors and on enquiring the reason was told

that the Government Art Commission had arrived in official automobiles for the purpose of censoring the exhibition before its opening. (I had been admitted by special dispensation it appeared -- prior to the public opening, already two and a half months late.) As I moved slowly toward the door, the seven members of the Commission, led by Lunacharsky, entered the hall and standing in front of the sculpture, began to discuss it. I watched them with interest, inwardly abusing myself for my paralysing ignorance of the language. When at length they moved toward the column by which I lingered, I nerved myself and advancing toward Lunacharsky, presented my card to him with a word or two in English, at the same time observing him closely. He is a thickset man of great nervous energy, about sixty years of age, of dark aristocratic Russian type, with a slightly greying goatee and moustache, and piercing black eyes behind narrow nose-glasses. He wore a black coat and peaked black hat of astrakhan; like the others, he had not removed it in the hall. He replied to me at once in French, courteously assuming that I spoke it; and in response to my request for an opportunity to talk with him about Russian schools and educational policies, named a time when I might come to his office, and consented to answer certain questions which I would put to him in writing.

Two or three days later, I learned that the opening of the art-exhibit had again been postponed because the Art Commission had been displeased with several pieces, among them, the Burial of Lenin which it had ordered removed before the opening. Why? .. There was nothing irreverent about it; it was the most nobly impressive group in the collection. The concept was self-evident. Was it not beautiful? It seemed so to me...It had been disapproved because it betrayed no proletarian feeling. It was too chaste, too classic, and therefore too bourgeois -- too dead. There was nothing about the limbs of the youthful pall-bearers to suggest that they were proletarian limbs. There were no overalls, no pick, shovel, sledge, or sickle; no miner's lamp, or carpenter's square; no boots; the faces even were not clearly those of toilers. In fine, it was too ideal in conception and, in the absence of anything to indicate that the working-class was bearing Lenin on its shoulders to the tomb, the piece was officially rejected and the gallery closed until it could be removed.

What a world of significance, I thought, lay in that deed! Of course, if one believes in the desirability and possibility of "conditioning," and so controlling the human mind, the sense of beauty necessarily is included. Indeed, any effective re-orientation must begin with a re-coloration of the aesthetic sense. Save in war-time censorship and propaganda, nobody in the modern world, since Loyola's Society of Jesus, has ever believed that it could be done or has seriously tried to do it. But in Soviet Russia for the fine arts as for the author and editor, one law, or fiat, holds: Thou shalt con-

tribute by thy creative expression to the desired revolutionary state of mind in the observer, or thou shalt not breathe in marble, in drama, or on canvas. Is any other inference possible?

Had I known about the rejection of the sculpture before meeting Comrade Lunacharsky I should not have been able to refrain from asking him about it; and doubtless he would have replied as frankly as he did to the questions which I submitted to him in writing. My first question was: What do you consider the most important cultural achievements of the Russian Revolution? To this Commissar Lunacharsky replied: "They may be seen in: 1. A great rise of the cultural level and in activities of the workmen and of peasant youth, of women, and of even the most backward national minorities which during the Czar's régime were completely neglected. 2. The number of children attending school, which has increased from forty-eight per cent to seventy per cent of the population. (The middle and higher schools are now open to the children of workmen and peasants; they now constitute from sixty to seventy per cent of all students, and in 1933 we shall introduce a compulsory school law.) 3. The press, which is now two and four half times as large as the pre-revolutionary press. It is disseminated chiefly among the masses of workers and peasants. The number of our books, notably scientific works, exceeds the number of those published in 1913. They are designed for the most part for the common man whose interest in reading is incomparably greater than before the Revolution."

Corroborating this statement about the press and the publication of books in Russia, I obtained from the Government Printing Office the following figures: "In 1913 -- 3, 500,000 newspapers were printed in Russia; by 1924 the figure was five and a half million; in 1925, seven million; in 1927, eight million. These newspapers do not circulate as did the pre-war press, in Poland, Finland, and the Baltic provinces lost to Russia by the World War. Especially noteworthy is the growth of certain types of newspapers: in the last two years the leading central and provincial papers have increased their circulation by forty-one and four-tenths per cent; professional papers by twelve and two-tenths per cent; papers designed for the labouring masses by thirty-two and two-tenths per cent; military magazines and newspapers by ninety-five and three-tenths per cent, and minority-nationality papers by thirty-nine and four-tenths per cent. The growth of farm papers is of especial interest; their issue amounted in 1923 to 150,000 copies; in 1924, to 300,000; in 1926, to 1,200,000; and in 1927, to 1,600,000 copies. The number of journals as compared with that before the war has decreased thirty per cent; but their circulation has increased, as above; the chief point being that they circulate among classes of the population which never read before. We have at least a hundred thousand bulletin-board newspapers; not a village and not a factory is without one." As further evidence

of cultural activity, I saw the first three volumes of a new fifteen-volume encyclopaedia issued by the Soviet Government Press and compiled by a staff of Russian scholars and scientists.

My second question was: Which Russian authors are most widely read? Of to-day? Of the past? Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorki? To this he replied: "Our workmen read the classics in large numbers. The cheap editions which we issue are so quickly bought that we find difficulty in issuing them fast enough. This applies to all the writers you mentioned." And he added, "Of foreign writers, the most popular is the American, Upton Sinclair."

Concerning what Russia reads, a report of The Cultural-work Cabinet of the Moscow Central Labour Council -- published in the *Isvestia* while I was in Moscow -- says that the workers read "Russian writers, mostly -- (65%) ; and lesserly, foreign authors -- (35%). Contrarily, clerks and others read foreign authors more -- (56%), and the works of Russian writers less -- (44%). Of the workers' reading, the classics constitute 21.8% ; pre-revolutionary non-classical literature, 12.2%; and 'new literature' -- post-revolutionary -- 66%. On the demand stand, first at the present time, the following books: Gladkof's novel of the civil war in Russia entitled 'Cement'; Leonof, "Barsuki" (Hedgehogs) ; Neverof, 'City of Bread' -- 'Tashkent'; Serafimovitch, "The Iron Torrent"; Seifoulina, 'Virineya' ; Romanof, "Tales". Of the classics, Gorki leads all the others with his 'Mother', "The Artamanof Affair", 'Among Strangers', 'Childhood', and his shorter tales. Next come Turgenev's 'Virgin Soil', 'Fathers and Sons', "The Squire's Nest", and 'A Hunter's Notebook' ; Tolstoy, "War and Peace", 'Anna Karenina', and 'Resurrection'; Dostoiefsky, 'Crime and Punishment'; Chekhov, 'Goucharof' ; and Gogol, "Taras Bulba".

"Of foreign books read in Moscow public libraries Jack London is first, with 'Martin Eden', 'The Iron Heel', and 'The Little Woman of the Large House'; Upton Sinclair is second with 'King Coal', 'The Jungle', 'Jimmie Higgins'; then Curwood, with 'Kazan', followed by Kellermann -- 'The Tunnel'; Victor Hugo -- 'Les Misérables' and 'L'Homme Qui Rit'. Among clerks and employees O. Henry is more popular than Kellermann; then come Claude Farrère, Victor Hugo, and Anatole France."

"All of which," concludes the report in the *Isvestia*, "demonstrates the wholesome taste of our readers. We have no bad literature in our sixty-three libraries." The foregoing investigation was made in December, 1927, among three thousand readers in the trade-union reading-rooms of Moscow.

The Government Printing Office has published in twelve volumes all of Upton Sinclair save only his *Book of Health*; also *Sin*.

clair Lewis, and Theodore Dreiser's *Color of a Great City* and *Twelve Men*; Albert Edwards' *Comrade Yetta*, Edna Ferber's *Show Boat* and *So Big*, Fanny Hurst's *Song of Life*, Ben Hecht's *Humpty Dumpty* and *Count Bruga*, Lawrence Conrad's *Temper*, and four volumes of O. Henry, within the last year or two. Incidentally, no royalties have been paid the authors, although last November Sinclair Lewis was offered when he was in Moscow, back payment of royalties, but he declined until a similar offer should be made to other American authors. This present season likewise, several American publishers are pirating in English translation, half a dozen Soviet publications.

While on the subject of books I asked Lunacharsky about his own book on religion, published several years ago, which, according to a rumour current in Europe has been suppressed in Russia. "As concerns that book, which I wrote twenty-five years ago," said he, "I have changed many of my opinions and have re-published only those parts which coincide with my present views. This clearly is every author's right. All my books are issued without difficulty by our publishing companies and in most instances enjoy a large circulation, particularly my books on educational subjects."

I then asked him about religion, especially about moral instruction in the Soviet schools. Upon this subject Comrade Lunacharsky was most emphatic. "In the secondary schools -- for children above twelve -- " he said, "a purely scientific view is taught, of the origin and development of religion in society, with emphasis upon the injurious rôle played by religions that have outlived their time, in the conflicts between labour and capital, between oppressed and oppressors. Concerning morality, we practise and inculcate the highest morality created by Humanity -- the world conceived as a brotherhood of peoples, to a realization of which the world-wide triumph of the self-conscious proletariat is absolutely necessary. For this great end everyone must live and, if need be, die. To serve this cause we must educate ourselves in the spirit of profound Collectivism. It is to be regretted that not all has been done as yet to aid this morality to exterminate the retarding power of organized religion and all manner of *pefit-bourgeois* notions."

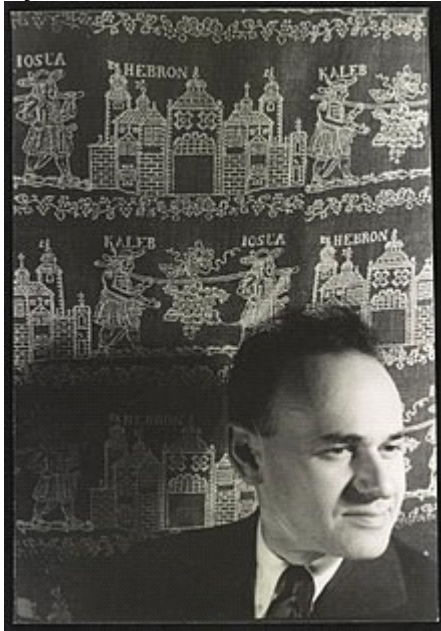
All manner of *pefit-bourgeois* notions! What a way of dismissing theology and a hundred sectarian aberrations!

Communism and Collectivism, Leninism and Proletarianism, as ideals and ideas, tasks and attitudes and slogans, demanding from their adherents an absolute loyalty, have not yet become platitudes in Russia, and will not, I think, while Soviet Russia feels her gif in process of regeneration as the embattled and unique embodiment of them. And is not a certain gorgeousness created in the atmosphere beyond our Valley of Disillusion by the spectacle of

vigorous, apparently intelligent, desperately sincere men devoting their utmost energy to the attainment and establishment of any ideal, old or new? . . . The notion occurred to me many times in my journey that perhaps for Russia a mission has been ordained: that to atone for Russian imperialism's having been the chief cause of the collapse of European civilization into the gulf of war in 1914, Russia will become the chief force making for its integration. If nothing more -- yet I suspect that it is destined to be more -- to be a tonic-purgative for an over-sophisticated, cynical, senescent, cunningly complicated world of individualistic enterprise, a world which has long since solved the problem of adequately producing wealth, but falters at the task of finding satisfactory methods for controlling and justly equalizing its distribution.

BETTER THAN ECSTASY

by Gilbert Seldes



Seldes, by Van Vechten

Letters From Joseph Conrad, 1895-1924. Edited with Introduction and Notes by Edward Garnett.
amo. 313 pages. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. \$3.

IT would be interesting to give these letters of Conrad to a reader totally unaware of the course of Conrad's literary career, of the critical approval he won at the beginning and the popular success which, to his surprise, arrived at the end. I think that such a reader would decide on internal evidence that the writer

was a minor artist, a holdover from the Nineties, and in all probability a man of comparatively little talent, tortured by the desire to write and utterly lacking the capacity.

Actually we know that Conrad was in the major line of romancers. Quarrel as people may about his exact ranking in that line, they can hardly deny him his essential quality -- the possession of a powerful creative faculty ; he had nothing to do with the rancours of the Nineties; the list of his novels is proof of his tremendous capacity. In a sense the one thing he lacked was the desire to write. Edward Garnett, to whom all these letters were written, was like a physician injecting powerful stimulants whenever it was necessary for Conrad to write, for the retired seaman was a spinner of yarns and writing seemed to him an absurd difficulty.

Garnett says that Conrad exaggerated his reluctance, his dismay, his torture. No doubt. But he did not invent them. He intensified something which was real, the burden of his art. The pressure for three years came from a single source -- the book which was later known as *The Rescue*. It is mentioned first in March 1896 (as *The Rescuer*) ; the book appeared serially in 1919. Over forty references to this book occur in these letters -- more than for *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, three times as many as for *Lord Jim*. The *Rescue* was an incubus; at the end of his writing life, Conrad took up again a novel he had, by the workings of an obscure instinct, dropped for twenty years. "I am settling my affairs in this world and I should not have liked to leave behind me this evidence of having bitten off more than I could chew. A very vulgar vanity."

It was, perhaps, also desirable for him to return again to the narrow seas from which his early work came, to find rejuvenation. The truth is that *The Rescue*, the novel he could not write, haunted him, proved him feeble, set flies on his sensitive skin.

Once he wrote, in despite of Crocean aesthetics:

"To be able to think and not able to express is a fine torture. I am undergoing it -- without patience...The progressive episodes of the story w#// not emerge from the chaos of my sensations. I feel nothing clearly...I am exceedingly miserable. My task appears to me as sensible as lifting the world without that fulcrum which even that conceited ass, Archimedes, admitted to be necessary."

It was, I suppose, this torture which led him to say a few years later, when he already enjoyed the friendship of Wells and James and Garnett, when his work was appearing in magazines of the highest standing:

"*The Outcast* is a heap of sand, the *Nigger* a splash of water, *Jim* a lump of clay...I am only very bruised, very sore, very humiliated...This is the effect of the book upon me; the intimate and personal effect. Humiliation."

It is, of course, only a matter of time before a critic with nothing else to do will psychoanalyse Conrad for us. There is the famous grandfather who would not eat the flesh of a dog during the Napoleonic campaign; there is Poland; there is the sea; there is the deliberate choice of a foreign tongue. Surely the combination of all these things indicates compulsions and neuroses; add them to the cries of fury and disgust which Conrad uttered while he worked and the effect is appalling.

I do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of such an analysis. But it ought to be clear that the analysis will tell us almost nothing about the value of the work. The imaginary reader I suggested above would make the common error of amateur analysts when they attack not a lesion, but a creation. They go to the man and not to the object created. Their results are not criticism.

I think that the present series of letters will interest writers as much as the more diffuse life and letters, edited by G. Jean-Aubry, will interest readers. The lights on Conrad's social personality are few and most of them are charming, but not particularly significant. A few literary references are entertaining: Conrad wanted to bite Shaw, hoped Ford (then Hueffer) would succeed (but took a malicious dig at him), was enraptured by a note from Henry James, recommended Norman Douglas, and so on. Things of this sort are better found in the larger collection which also covers enough of the painful ground of Conrad's troubles about money. The two things which one can find nowhere else are Conrad's attitude toward his work and his attitude toward the public. Distaste, lack of confidence, despair, and an occasional flash of assurance seem to sum up Conrad's emotions about his work. But read in connexion with his reminiscences, these letters become more illuminating. The soaring ecstasy of the poet, the fine frenzy, is never recorded; but there is another thing as enviable. That is the tremendous absorption which Conrad described and which, within limits, one feels sure he experienced. He lived for weeks, he has said, without consciousness of the outer world, dealing with the men and women, the bitter agonies and triumphs of the people he created. His body was at Pent Farm, his soul in Costaguana; looking back he cannot remember eating and drinking and sleeping -- only living with Decoud and Nostromo. At the end he writes: "Congratulate me as upon a recovery from a dangerous illness."

It was that. It was also the highest point of his life, whenever it occurred. In those moments he separated himself from wife and children and publishers and agents; he always managed to live apart from a million small things. He had few abstract interests; he is a pure writer in the sense that his work has no social tendencies. His characters may have ideas, his books none. He concentrated all his forces in the single effort to create. The torture, the humiliation, the sadness of failure are hard to bear; but they helped to keep alive the energy by which Conrad lived. At the end he could have said, What I have gone through is life.

It did not give him happiness, particularly. There is no reason why he should have been happy, except in deference to a vulgar prejudice. He was living; he was not wasting or rotting away, even Happiness, in that connexion, would have been impertinent. you

His relation to the public (including critics) is clear. He sin wanted to be popular for a single reason -- because popularity meant royalties. He did not for a moment confuse this purpose with the purpose of his writing which seemed to be purely the exercise of his creative gift. If the *Nigger* had to be unpopular, -- so be it; he would make no change. Toward the end of his life after a second-rate novel (in his canon) began a new career for him -- the career of a novelist with a large following. After *Chance* he wrote some excellent books, but his great work all came before it. Almost at the end of his life *The Rover*, skilfully handled by his American publishers, gave Conrad the sensations of a best-seller.

In reviewing this book in The Dial noted the circumstance that a novel full of weaknesses had brought Conrad his greatest popularity, and guessing at a reason, suggested that he was essentially a story-teller, bound to captivate people somewhat wearied of criticism and lectures in their novels. Conrad was deeply moved. I did not know it at the time, but years later, in the Jean-Aubry collection I found a letter referring to this review in accents of profound emotion. To be named as the writer of "a popular novel" startled him; I think he was pleased to have his integrity unquestioned by one who did not like his novel.

To me the surprising thing was that he should have cared at all. In the letters to Garnett it is clear that for twenty years he respected one critic -- Garnett, tolerated a few, and despised the rest even when they praised him. Garnett, effacing himself from the pages of this book, understood what Conrad was after; his own letters are not published here. One of them, which Conrad answered on July 7, 1919, must have contained the secret of *The Rescue* -- at least what Conrad believed to be the secret -- and it ought to be published. Garnett did not inspire Conrad, but he gave him an intellectual discipline, as critics ought always to do for artists. The artists are often unwilling. It is a pleasure to

find one who could write:

"My dear, in your feelings, in your judgments, your enthusiasms and criticisms, in all your fine reactions to that 'best' which not every eye can see, you have been beautifully consistent, both in your subtle and your peremptory moods. It is thirty years now since I came ashore for good...Straight from the sea into your arms, as it were. How much you have done to pull me together intellectually only the Gods that brought us together know. For I myself don't. All I had in my hand was some little creative gift -- but not even one single piece of 'cultural' luggage. I am proud after all these years to have understood you from the first."

With his gift, could Conrad have helped writing those stories? Let the readers of *Trader Horn* answer and those who care in the faintest degree for literature silently praise Heaven for Edward Garnett. They need not commit themselves thereby to an estimate of Conrad's greatness -- merely to a prejudice in favour of a much abused art. Or possibly two arts.

1 June, 1924, page \$41.

2 *Life and Letters of Joseph Conrad*. Edited by G. Jean-Aubry. Two volumes. 8vo. 329 and 348 pages. Doubleday Doran and Company. \$10.

A HOUSE-PARTY

Review by MARIANNE MOORE

Armed With Madness. By Mary Butts. s2mo.
238 pages. Albert and Charles Boni. \$2.50.

"THE sea lay three parts round the house, invisible because of the wood...The people who had the house were interested in the wood and its silence." "Poverty and pride, cant and candor, raw flesh and velvet" seem collectively to ask, "Are we never to have any peace, only adventure and pain?" to say "there is no good will left anywhere in the world."

They were Drusilla Taverner -- "'Scylla;" Carston, an American; Picus "unnaturally supple;" Carston "had seen him pick up something behind him with his hands as if it had been in front;" Clarence "with a feeling for decoration best served in cities." "One rougher and shorter, fairer, better bred, called Ross. Then a boy, Scylla's brother Felix Taverner."

"Ross arranged their chairs in the veranda while the storm

banged about." "For an hour it rained, through sheet lightning, and thunder like a departing train, the hills calling one to another."

The Sanc-Grail is supposed to have been fished from the well, but "Picus had taken his father's cup . . . had run to small mystifications . . . had whistled up mystery with what was now undoubtedly a victorian finger-bowl."

"We don't seem to have cleared up anything," said Clarence.

'Cleared up,' said Picus chattering at them...In this there was something that was not comic, in the dis-ease he imparted."

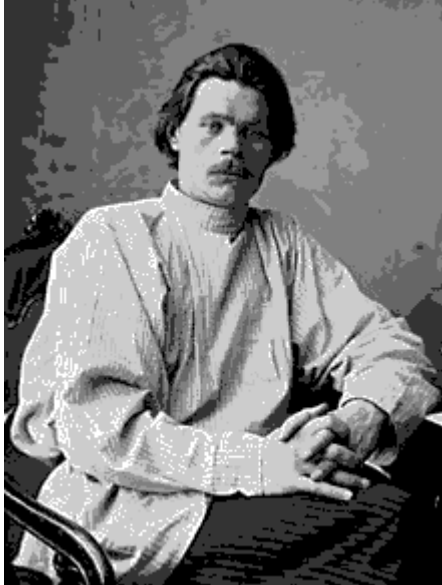
'When consulted about disposing of the cup the vicar suggests replacing it where they got it. "' 'It seems to like wells,'" he said. " 'And truth, if she prefers not to talk, can return to one.'"

" 'Good,' said Picus, 'learn it to be a toad.' "

One sees the artist in Miss Butts, in her liking to watch "how violently, strangely, and in character people will behave," though an attitude of being surprising in matters of personal freedom seems needless. The iron hand of unconvetion can be heavier than the iron hand of convention; and heresy in respect to this or that orthodoxy is perhaps a greater compliment to it than one sets out to pay, amounting really in the vehemence of protest, to subjection; to marriage and various other kinds of conformity Miss Butts pays compliments of this grudging, paining variety.

There are gruesome things here, as there were continually in the minds of the maddened conversers -- "while high over them the gulls squalled like sorrow driven up." But there are many graces. And it is a triumph for the author that it is a mistake to recount anything she writes without recounting it in her own words. Sensitiveness sponsors defiance; it also sponsors homage to beauty. Strictness of touch and accurate drawing give "the endless turf-miles which ran up a great down into the sky;" "above the thunder a gull repeating itself . . . a little noise laid delicately upon the universal roar of air;" Carston "beautifying himself scrupulously and elaborately as a cat;" Picus' father, a collector with "a theory of the rights of owners to their property" -- 'prup-property: prupproperty: prupproperty:" Lydia (in London) "in a too short frock and a too tight hair-wave and a too pink make-up, reading the Romaunt de la Rose;" and Lydia's husband. "His method was to cut conversation, to interrupt whatever was said, and when he spoke, interrupt himself, so there should never be any continuity. Perfectly sound...Could show them that not being a gentleman was worth something."

Little thicknesses are chipped away. Emphasis of writing and of attitude are equal, and as a change from the periodic sentence a syn-copated rhetoric is pleasant; though emphasis without interruption amounts to no emphasis and one has the feeling that a mixture of code and declarative sentence may be best. There is much to notice, as one proceeds -- rejecting, accepting, renovated and attentive. Would a Bostonian say, "I reckon" in the way in which Carston says it? Is flavour contributed or sacrificed by the elegiac curfew chime of current literacy -- that is to say, by the interpolated aphorism: "When we were very young;" "meaning of meaning;" "portraits of the artist ;" things from the Bible? But to doubt is merely a part of liking, and of feeling. One need not read Mary Butts if one has not a feeling for feeling. Her presentation of what one feels is here as accurate as of what one sees. Scylla "wished the earth would not suddenly look fragile, as if it was going to star shifting about...There was something wrong with all of them, or with their world. A moment missed, a moment to come. 0; not coming. Or either or both. Shove it off on the War; but that did not help." The "trick on Carston was ill-mannered, a little cruel. Also irrelevant." 'What he could not have done, [to others] others could do [to him]." It is a compassionate view Miss Butts takes of this informed, formless party; of its "insolent insincerity" and seeming insufficiency -- of Clarence smiling back at Picus "'as if he had to smile under pain, his own, any one's," listening "'till the time came when he could listen no longer, and hid his face, the awful pain rising in him drowning Picus' presence." "There was something in their lives spoiled and inconclusive like the Grail," she says. Some would say nothing in them was like the Grail. But Miss Butts is not palming anything off on us. We may make what we may of it. It is sympathy she offers us in Carston's reply when the vicar wonders "Whether a true picture of the real is shown by our senses alone." "All I can say is that I've never never been so bothered, never behaved so like a skunk, never so nearly fell dead in my tracks till I got down here and began to think about such things. It's unfashionable now, you know -- "



the not-at-all-gay Miss Gorki, 1900

CHEKHOV AND GORKI

NESOBRAUNNIYE Pisma (Uncollected Letters). By A.P. Chekhov. Edited by N. K. Piskunov. Comments by L. M. Fridkes. 147 pages. State Press, Moscow and Leningrad. 1 r.

Letters of Maxim Gorki To K. S. P. Dorovskiy. Published in Pechat i Revoliutsia (Press and Revolution). Book II. State Press, Moscow and Leningrad.

RARELY have we had the good fortune to have so much of a writer's correspondence preserved, as of Anton Chekhov's; his letters, in the Russian, make six sturdy volumes. And now a small supplementary volume has made its appearance, issued by the State Press. This new collection adds little to our knowledge of Chekhov, but it does emphasize the Chekhov we already knew. We see him, as always, preoccupied with matters relating to writing, good writing. Problems of structure and technique obsess him as they must any writer aspiring to perfect expression. And again we are made aware that this master of the short story had failed in his chief ambition to write a full-fledged novel in the manner of his famous predecessors. Unceasing contemplation of the much-desired, never-to-be-attained goal, caused him not a little heart-burning; and to the end he was to regard his shorter efforts as mere tunings-up preparatory to the creation of a narrative in the longer form.

The present collection of letters makes it quite clear how intensely Chekhov had struggled to pass from miniature painting to full-length canvases. His longer short stories were deliberate attempts in this direction. But he was too honest and exacting a critic not to see that the short story and the novel were distinct arts, employing each a different structure, and that his exertions were doomed to failure, since to achieve length it is not sufficient to string together a number of episodes, however perfectly expressed. There had to be an inner integrity holding the whole together, and not mere bonds external to the structure.

His long-nursed desire and his failure to achieve it have their own pathos. In a letter written toward the end of 1888 he says: "I should like to write a novel. I have a wonderful subject, and at times I am seized with a terrible desire to sit down and tackle it. But I seem not to have strength enough. I have indeed begun it, and I am afraid to continue." As if to explain his timidity, he goes on: "I haven't yet any political, religious, or philosophical outlook on life; I change my outlook monthly, so shall have to limit myself to descriptions of how my heroes love, marry, beget and bear children, die and speak." Of course, the absence of such an outlook makes his strength as a short-story writer; it gives him that extraordinary detachment which enables him to state facts without a basic idea. At the same time, he is too conscious of Russian literary history not to know that a social or philosophical idea has always served as a basis for the novels of his countrymen; not even Turgenev, celebrated for his detachment as an artist, is quite free from it in his longer work. In the very year he wrote the letter from which I have quoted he had written one of his longest stories, *The Steppe*, and his own opinion of it expressed to the same correspondent is of some pertinence here.

"I have taken on a big thing," he says. "I have already written more than two printer's sheets, and, very likely, shall write another three...For my theme I have taken the steppe...Each separate chapter has its own story, and all the chapters are bound together in close affinity, like five figures in a quadrille. I am trying to give them a common odour and a common tone, which is not so difficult because one person passes through all the chapters. I feel that I have overcome a great deal . . . but, generally speaking, the result is rather strange and in no small measure original. Not being in the habit of writing at length, and from habitual fear of writing anything superfluous, I fall into an extreme. All the pages appear compact . . . the impressions crowd, jostle one another; the pictures, or if you like, flashes, tightly press against one another, and follow in an endless chain, and are therefore tiring. In general, the result is not a picture, but a dry, detailed compendium, in the nature of a synopsis; instead of an artistic representation of the steppe, which is all of a piece, I offer the reader 'an ency-

clopaedia of the steppe.' "

Words like these carry their own commentary. The rest of the letters are in the usual Chekhovian manner. It is hard to resist quoting from them the following pregnant sentence referring to stagecraft: "One must not have a loaded gun in the scene, if there is no intention of firing it."

Maxim Gorki is not so felicitous a letter-writer as Chekhov, if one is to judge from a group of his letters just published in Pechat i Revoliutsia, in connexion with his sixtieth birthday which has recently been celebrated in Soviet Russia. Most of these letters were written about thirty years ago, when Gorki was trying to get his first books published, and they are addressed to his first publishers. They are, for the most part, concerned with business: contracts, translation rights, correction of proofs, and, above all, demands for money, which he confessed slipped out of his hands rather easily. To be sure, they are occasionally punctuated with literary, intimate, or piquant items; for example, when he writes that he wants the return of *One Autumn Night*, "as it is of an autobiographic character," and he desires its inclusion elsewhere; or when he tells of a German woman who had applied to him for authorization to translate his stories into French: 'My son has drowned the letter in an unmentionable vessel"; he wonders how he shall get at her address. Again, in several letters he implores his publisher to procure for him a translation of Gibbon: "to possess Gibbon's works as my very own has been long a dream of mine." In reply to a letter from his publisher about terms of contract, Gorki writes: "It may not please you that I refuse to discuss matters of money with you, but God knows, dear Sergey Pavlovitch, it's all the same to me how much money I get: I can spend it without any sense or pleasure, even a 100,000. Believe me: I don't think of you as a publisher, a commercial man, but as a comrade in spirit and in business." Does an Anglo-Saxon publisher on either side of the water ever get a letter like that from one of his Anglo-Saxon authors? Or like this: "Better not praise me for all sorts of trifles. Man is weak and being liked pleases him. Forgive the moral, but God knows, it is shameful to listen to praise when one is not worth it."

There are a number of references to *Foma Gordeev*, on which he is hard at work at the time (1889). "This story is furnishing me with not a few happy moments and very many fears and doubts, It should be a broad, comprehensive picture of contemporary life, and at the same time should show the fierce struggle of a healthy energetic man seeking tasks suited to his strength, outlets for his energy. He feels cooped up. Life is crushing him, he sees that there is no place in it for heroes, they are knocked off their feet by petty trifles, like some Hercules who having conquered the serpents is felled by a cloud of midges. Will this come out sufficiently

clear and understandable? Tell me how you like the beginning."

In short, he is possessed by a philosophy and an idea, the germ of all great Russian novels, and he wonders if he can express it in terms of creative realism. Is not this fragment a commentary on Chekhov and his doubts? It was the Russian critic Mikhailovsky who once observed that great men travel in pairs, one complementing the other. And he cited Rousseau and Voltaire, Dickens and Thackeray, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, et cetera. He concluded with the names of Chekhov and Gorki. They are opposites, they complement one another, truth lies somewhere between the two, and the two make Russia.

It is, of course, Gorki, not Chekhov, who is the hero of the existing régime, which, in honour of its favourite's birthday, is preparing a twenty-volume edition of his work as free supplement to any periodical issued by the State Press.

BRIEFER MENTION

The Deadlock, by V. V. Vieressaev, translated from the Russian by Nina Wissotzky and Camilla Coventry (12mo, 384 pages; Century: \$2) is an outpouring of the mingled pity and pessimism and philosophy inherent in the Russian soul and so tragically made manifest in the Revolution. The story unfolds a swift and vivid sequence of events leading to an inconclusiveness which is itself significant. "Nothing is finished," in the words of one of the workers. "We are not that sort of people." The same deathless striving and the same stoic acceptance are echoed in the pages of *The Land of THE CHILDREN*, by Sergey Gussiev Orenburgsky, translated from the Russian by Nina Nikolawvna Selivanova (8vo, 421 pages; Longmans, Green: \$2.50), a novel of kindred theme but written with a more intimate understanding of the peasant heart. Here is a picture of Russia as "a sea of tears shed by the people" and a vision of the ultimate triumph of a finer international spirit. Both these novels have been sympathetically translated, and their appearance is added proof of the creative ferment which continues to animate the Russian spirit.

The Intelligent Woman's Guide To Socialism, by Bernard Shaw (8vo, 463 pages; Brentano's: \$3). In this useful Fabian hand-book no important social problem has been overlooked. Mr Shaw's main cure for the evils that exist is the same that he advocated twenty years ago, namely, equality of income for all alike. He retains throughout, his wit, his adroit aplomb, and his sanguine, nineteenth-century reasonableness.

The Other Side, by Struthers Burt (12mo, 329 pages; Scribner's: \$2) will be noted chiefly for its emphasis on two themes. One is the inadequacy of

the Menckonian criticism of America; the other is the inapplicability of most European criticism of America. Mr Burt is suave, ironical, witty, and intelligent. He gives ample ground to the assailants of Babbitt and to the critics of America; he uses the tu quoque only to indicate the frailty of the method; and he indicates the possession of a standard and a point of view. As an indication that all wit and intelligence are not on the side of the boob-haters, the book is an omen.

American Inquisitors, by Walter Lippmann (12mo, 120 pages; Macmillan: \$1.25) and *Let Freedom Live*, by Arthur Garfield Hays (10mo, 341 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2.50) are complementary volumes in the study of the decline of liberty in America. Mr Hays' book, dealing with six cases in which a fundamental liberty was involved -- including the Scopes trial and that of Sacco and Vanzetti -- is marred by a jeering tone and by the failure to examine fundamentals. Mr Lippmann lets his irony play in Socratic dialogues which compose part of his book; he seems to care deeply for liberty and to be willing to re-examine all fundamental principles. Mr Hays may stir people to protest against injustice; Mr Lippmann will lead them to enquire what justice is.

Present-Day Russia, by Ivy Lee (8vo, 204 pages; Macmillan: \$2.50). A hurried account of a ten day visit to Russia is not necessarily a magazine of aesthetic ammunition, but is in this instance effective, systematic, and most acceptable to non-excursive herbivora. It is easier to read of the mountain which is Russia than to be the Mohammed that Mr Lee has bravely been. In what is here told of marriage laws, espionage, art, trade relations, the press, and much else, he conveys a lively sense of conditions in the Soviet Utopia.

OCTOBER

IGOR STRAVINSKY
BY BORIS DE SCHLOEZER

Translated From the French by Ezra Pound

THE FOREWORD

IN 1924 La Revue Musicale issued a special Stravinsky number containing among other things an essay by the author of these presents. A reader acquainted with that article might, calling upon the force of memory, observe that the portrait of the composer which I now attempt to assemble differs in certain ways from that presented in 1924. I am not trying to worm out of the

discrepancy ; I wd. rather insist upon the dissemblance and underline it the more. If there is one thing I regret above another it is that I cannot more completely renew the conception of the Stravinskian art, which was at the root of the former essay.

Among the more or less dubious principles of criticism, one appears to me undeniable, to wit: A work of art is inexhaustible for our intelligence, in the same way that a living person is inexhaustible, it constitutes in a sense a sort of "complexio oppositorum."

Starting from this principle, sometimes enunciated, more often tacitly admitted, one usually ends with a negation of any dogmatism whatsoever in criticism, and a negation of all "spirit of system" or classification -- demanding on the contrary whether it be possible for a man who wants to understand, and to transmit his comprehension, to renounce dogmatizing, and systematizing; to renounce the introduction of an artificial unity, a sort of Ersatz, into the work, to replace the living unity, infinitely rich and complex, and full of contradictions which the (analytic?) intelligence! cannot get at. We have to appear dogmatic, (the savant, and even the experimenter himself cannot escape this); the only corrective one can rake up in such a method is clearly to take count of one's own limits and insufficiencies, and be at any moment ready to abandon any single point of view, the minute one has pushed it to the extreme development possible to it...There is in this a question of tact and also of humility.

At any rate, this is what I am now attempting, surrendering the chronological treatment of Stravinsky's work (that I had observed in 1924) and considering -- not as in time -- the different characteristic aspects of that work as it now presents itself in ensemble.

RUSSIAN AND EUROPEAN

Interviewed by a Russian journalist, Stravinsky once condemned Scriabine as "a being devoid of all national character. He hasn't a passport. One must have a passport."

Emitted in this categoric tone, which one finds in Stravinsky's music as clearly as in his conversation, this declaration -- fairly debatable at first approach -- appears in any case very characteristic of Stravinsky himself, especially if one considers that the declaration was very recently made. Since *Pulcinella*, that is from 1918 to the present, Stravinsky has given us a series of works which (with the exception of *Mavra*, where he turns back to Glinka) seem to have nothing especially Russian about them, but which connect rather with XVIIIth-century Italian and German traditions. It

is now ten years since the composer abandoned the so vast domain of russian popular song, from which he had for so long drawn inspiration, and which had been the base of nearly all his work up to *Noces and Renard* (1917).

Nevertheless the author of the *Octuor* and of so many other compositions into which there enters not one ounce of Russian material (Russian, that is, in the sense that Rimsky's *Sadko* is Russian) evidently considers himself, even to-day, an essentially national artist. Before deciding whether this pretension is justified, we must try to solve a question of more general order: How can we determine the national character of any musical composition?

1 The original reads "intelligence," but obviously indicates that of the critic, not intelligence at large -- Translator's note.

In other words: what criterion can we employ to discover whether a given composer is national, and whether another given composer is not?

The first idea springing into one's head is that the national character of a work depends on the nature of the themes employed by the composer; all works wd. be national if nourished by melodies, rhythms, harmonic formulae taken from a given folk-lore, or finding in it their inspiration. But this hypothesis won't work, for on this basis the *Quatuor, op. 59* of Beethoven wd. be a russian work, and the *Enfantines* of Moussorgsky wouldn't. Debussy would not have a passport (or what Mr Stravinsky calls one) but one could get such a passport very easily, and composers cd. swap passports when the whim took them; to gain greek nationality, for example, one cd. simply reach into the Bourgauld-Ducoudray grab-bag ; and Rimsky's collection wd. permit any one of us to write Russian music . . . We must, evidently, seek for some other formula.

Are we to call a work "national" when it conforms to the musical traditions of the country, or not merely to the musical traditions, but to the country's modes of thinking and feeling, and to its conception of art? This seems nearer the mark. And yet all these things are very vague and inconstant. The moment we try to elucidate this idea, it shows itself to be filled with traps. Admitting that each nation has what you might call its genius, something peculiar to it, and manifest particularly in its musical feeling, and even in its very conception of the sonorous art, and of musical beauty, how are we to compute the specific characteristics of this "genius"? We can't get at them directly; the thing is offered us only in the series of productions which constitute the art of a people, or of a country. France, certainly, possesses its musical traditions; we know them from the compositions of the masters,

which seem to display among themselves a certain consanguinity, but this is very indefinite and undefinable. And who moreover guarantees us against the insurgence of some great composer who will turn the lot of these traditions bottom side up? One may be sure that in such a contingency, people will not fail to object to this "new movement," and against this "revolutionary" stuff they will set the "true french tradition"; but . . . since the musician of genius will, in spite of all this, impose himself . . . they will end by annexing him, and by discovering that although he innovates, it is "nevertheless undeniable that he" connects with the above mentioned "tradition" and that he is only developing it and enriching it. Such, in short, was the story of Debussy, at first rejected as "against clear ideas," "contrary to the latin genius" and so forth, and to-day (quite rightly) considered the french musician par excellence.

I drag in this example not for the vain pleasure of deriding yet again and once more the inconstancy of human opinion, but because I think it brings us to the heart of our problem. The desire to annex a man of genius is the expression not only of a very natural national pride, but also of the idea, or rather presentiment that a man of genius can't help being representative of a country, a nation, and that, in consequence, he ought to be connectable in one way or another with his precursors, who have reflected each in his way the spirit of their nation. In this sense one may say that genius has always a passport, that it can't help having one, even if it don't want to; thus reducing Stravinsky's remark to a demand that the artist ought to have genius; or that denying an artist national character one denies his talent; and that to say a given artist has talent and no national character is to emit an antinomy. ;

If we admit this essentially representative character of the artist, starting with the postulate that this exceptional animal, this phenomenon unique in its kind, is eminently "typical," and that he (the monstrosity) and not the man in the street really incarnates the genius of the race, then our question: By what criterion shall we judge that a composer is national? leaves us but one answer: He is national in proportion to the actual worth of his work. And in the particular case before us, we have to admit a priori that Stravinsky's art is profoundly rooted in the soil of Russia, as profoundly as that of Glinka or Moussorgsky.

We shd. try to discover Stravinsky's passport. It will not be easy; for if it is undeniable that the man of genius is necessarily, in one sense, "traditionalist," his very function consists in realizing and bringing to light certain facets of the national spirit which have, up to his day, remained hidden, which have existed perhaps only as latent potential, and which have seemed perhaps wholly alien to that spirit. In Stravinsky's case the element of innova-

tion is particularly noticeable; to such a degree that many, even among his admirers, deny that there is any national character to his work subsequent to Pulcinella. This seems to me a prize example of that disastrous method which works not from historic facts -- here the series of extant musical compositions of the russians -- but with general ideas, such as "the slavic soul" or "the latin genius," and so forth; ideas which aren't even the product of an abstraction but merely a sort of residuum, the lees of divers impressions and images. If we want to find Stravinsky's passport we shd. keep free of these vague conglomerations, and keep hold of the relations which exist -- ought to exist -- between his art and the actual works of his predecessors, remaining where possible in the domain of fact.

II

The beginning of Russian music is usually dated from Glinka, and rightly. You may, up to a point, consider him the Peter the Great of Russian musical art. Before the Life for the Czar Russia had a popular music, extremely rich and varied in the different regions but as yet very imperfectly known; the compositions almost exclusively vocal, were the work of amateurs, "dilettantes" as they were then called, and foreign artists, mostly Italians, who came to the Petersburg court.

These dilettantes and even certain Italians, such as Cavos in his opera Ivan Soussanine, had already tried to introduce russian popular songs in the music of court and salon. Glinka's music differs from that of his predecessors and contemporaries in the very nature of melodies chosen, and also in the method of treatment.

The russian musical folk-lore was a true terra incognita at the beginning of the last century. The dilettantes, and naturally even more the foreigners knew nothing of russian songs but the semi-popular stuff that had already felt the influence of occidental musical training. This meant that they knew nothing of the songs essentially modal in nature, and that have a peculiar twist that Europe now knows by way of Rimsky's transpositions and from those of Borodine and Moussorgsky, but which wd. certainly have shocked and appalled the predecessors of Glinka (had they met them) by their "rough and barbarous" aspect.

But what is more important, these popular episodes had been merely a sort of hors d' oeuvre, curiosities more or less exotic, pleasing on that ground, and treated without research or synthesis.

Glinka's glory consists precisely in having made this paradoxical synthesis, which none of his forerunners seems to have dreamed of.

His musical gifts, his taste, his technical mastery infinitely superior to that of the "dilettanti" permitted him to take these national songs as basis, and build upon them an art occidental in form, thus conferring a european nationalization on the russian musical genius.

But here one shd. observe an interesting fact, gravid with consequence: Glinka's operas (and naturally his romances in higher degree) out of which all russian music has emerged, the *Life for the Czar*, *Rousslann and Ludmila*, generally seem to the foreigner insufficiently russian. The italian elements that one easily notices in them annoy the european, who imagines that the art of Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodine, and Moussorgsky constitutes a progress from that of Glinka in that it is purer and more national. Yet the Russian opinion differs entirely from this, and it might seem to have some sort of value. Russians recognized themselves in this music full of italian, french, and german influence. One must not forget that the Five never denied Glinka, they considered themselves as his heirs, and saw *Rousslann* as the masterwork of Russian music.

The error of the westerners is quite explicable, they seek in Russian art precisely its differences from their own; that is to say a certain "barbarous" quality, rough, incult, as you might say, asiatic. This asiatic visage seems to them the true face of Russia. A de-orientalized Russian is no longer, as they see him, a real one. One cannot deny that oriental thought and sensibility have had an effect on russian art, but this art has also its own particular physiognomy, and this also is undeniable. The exotic character which for Europeans clothes certain oriental pages of Rimsky, of Borodine, of Balakireff is also apparent to Russians, and exercises upon them a charm analogous to that felt by the French and Germans.

It is Glinka, moreover, who first showed the musical East to the Russians, and who gave it nationalization papers in our policed and learned music; but *Rousslann and Ludmila* is based on the contrast between the russian world and the asiatic. This contrast is no less apparent, intentional, and systematic in Borodine's *Prince Igor*. The *Steppes of Central Asia*, by the same composer, displays this contrast in still more striking manner with the direct opposition of the soldier's song, clearly diatonic and frankly rhythmic, to the oriental song with its tickling chromatism and its boneless undulation. Ultimately one finds this contrast even in the *Oiseau de Feu*, the only work in which Stravinsky has offered sacrifice to musical orientalism. Everywhere and always, in russian music since Glinka, the orient is treated as a picturesque element, its characteristics serve to underline still more heavily the specific characteristics of russian song. The complete opposite is true of the occidental elements audible in the works of Glinka

and his successors, especially of Tschaikovsky. Obviously in fitting the russian popular melodies to the european musical idiom, with its two modes, its tonal conceptions, its complex forms, its summary and rigid rhythmic, one had to commit violence in certain ways to the original melodic character, and to make certain sacrifices, the importance of which was certainly not apparent to Glinka; nevertheless his works, and the whole subsequent development of russian music amply justify the sacrifice made. "Conquerors are not judged" . . . this victory itself being the proof that the way taken by Glinka was the right way. Such a success as the *Life for the Czar*, in which Mozart, italian opera, the french opéra comique, and russian song are composed into a living unity, bears witness to the profound affinity existing between russian musical sensibility and european musical culture. In receiving this culture, so peculiar, so conventional, but in its way so complete and finished, the russian musicians did not betray their origins; had it been otherwise they could at most have written nothing more than pastiches, and would have remained merely imitators, more or less clever. What strikes people immediately about Glinka even if they don't much like his art, is the mastery of it which makes him the peer of the western european composers of his time. The Five are his inferiors in this mastery, there is clumsiness in certain of their works, one finds them behaving as pupils at once timid and daring, or as autodidacts.

Stravinsky's case seemed incomprehensible, and the author of the Symphony for Wind Instruments seemed devoid of national character to those (still the immense majority) who repeat the old gag about Scratch the Russian you find the Tartar. They think russian art ought, and of necessity, to be violent, bedizened, nostalgic.

But any one knowing the good period of russian history, its golden age, from the reign of Alexander 1st through the first years of Nicholas 1st will grasp the true filiation of Stravinsky. This period gives us Glinka, the first of the russian composers, and also Pushkin, the greatest poet of Russia, whom even Dostoevsky proclaimed the "very incarnation of Russian genius." Pushkin, like Glinka, owes much to occidental masters, he was fed on foreign writing, especially french and english, both Chénier and Byron exercising immense influence on him.

I cite only these two cases, but one might cite many others, works impregnated with this taste, this measure, this equilibrium, or even marked with the classic spirit, qualities, that is, which the west is wont to claim as its own particular property.

These qualities appear likewise in the architecture of Alexander the First, "*Empire*" triumphing in Petersburg, differing wholly from ancient Moscow, where italian barocco mingles with forms taken from Asia. If we go back still further, beyond the mongol

invasions that modified the visage of antique Russia, we will find the same care for a harmony, the same formalist research, the same so called "classic" spirit, in both the russian painting and building, that had drunk in Byzantine traditions, which being Byzantine were, in consequence, hellenistic; these were absorbed, and created admirable works, greatly superior to the debased orientalist product of the Muscovite era.

One must hammer yet again on the fact that: If occidental traditions had been really alien to russian mentality and sensibility, the churches of Pskov and Novgorod, their frescoes, their ikons; and later in Petersburg under Alexander I, the apparition of artists like Glinka and Pushkin, or to-day a work like Stravinsky's *Oedipe*, that is to say all this art of equilibrium, and luminosity, truly Apollonian, would be absolutely inexplicable. It is, on the other hand, perfectly explainable if one admits that the russians are not aliens to the family of occidental races, bred on graeco-roman tradition; and that these artists, going for their schooling to european culture find themselves in their normal habitat, and but take up something rightly their own.

Certainly Moussorgsky's *Enfantines*, and *Boris Godounov* are essentially russian in the sense that one finds in them certain modes of thought and of sensibility that are common to a number of russian products -- musical, poetic, and plastic. Stravinsky's *Renard* is also russian, but so is the *Octuor* and also the *Oedipe*. One observes a relationship between the two latter works (as a group) and the *Renard*, a relationship analogous to that of a muscovite church, say the cathedral of St Basil the Blest, and the Place du Théâtre in Petersburg the crowning work of their "empire" style, for which a foreigner will care very little, searching as he will be, for the exclusively asiatic. And the relationship wd. be found again between Pushkin's popular tales, *Tzar Saltan*, for example, and the Dramatic Scenes, such as the *Miser Knight*, or Mozart and Salieri. When Stravinsky turns toward Bach or Haendel, he follows one of the russian traditions, and presents one of the numerous facets of Russia, the same one that Glinka presents in turning to Mozart, or Pushkin when he follows Molière or Tirso de Molina's *Guest of Stone*; or Tschaikovsky with his flagrant italianisms, Rimsky and Balakireff studying Berlioz and Liszt, or Scriabine following Wagnerian fashions. If Stravinsky declares that the last of these has no passport, it merely means that he denies the musical value of his work; having for it an almost physical repulsion he fails to perceive its russian filiation, its affinity with Tschaikovsky, who emerges directly from Glinka, the common ancestor of them all.

This historic excursion should help us to understand the situation of the various musical groups and parties at the moment of Stravinsky's début. Stravinsky studied in Petersburg, under Rimsky's direction. *Nevertheless his first compositions, Symphonie in E-flat 1905-7, Faun and Shepherdess*, a suite for voice and orchestra 1907, *Scherzo Fantastique* 1908, and various melodies for voice and piano 1908, '10, '11, show scarcely any trace of the Five, whose influence is only later apparent. His first works conform rather to the aesthetic of the Petersburg conservatoire.

Founded by Anton Rubinstein, this conservatory was from its inception the stronghold of academism. The Five, especially Balakireff and Rimsky, conducted a fervid war against it, which wd. seem to have ended in their victory, in so far as the latter became its director, without however changing the curriculum very greatly. When political events ousted him in 1905, he was succeeded by Glazounov, his pupil, the foremost local exponent of eclecticism and academic procedure. In his symphonies (nine of them) in his symphonic poems, the Kremlin, Stenka Razine, et cetera, he, Glazounov, does not fail to utilize popular melodies and rhythms, in close conjunction with themes and harmonic formulae of the Mendelssohnian, Brahmsian, or Wagnerian order, all with impeccable craftsmanship and a real virtuosity. This neuter style that reduces the works of the masters into formula -- this being the very essence of academism -- still exercises a great influence on the younger Russian composers, who regard it both as "classicism" and as "romanticism" (the latter term being void of meaning). In opposition to the picturesque and descriptive tendencies found in Rimsky and his friends; in opposition also to the exacerbated lyricism of Tchaikovsky and the Moscow school, Glazounov's academism in Russia was opening, it wd. seem, the way to "pure music" and to an essentially constructive art.

The young Stravinsky passed through this also. And the fact wd. seem highly significant, if one consider the path later taken by our composer. It seems as if, after a long détour, Stravinsky in his latest works has come back to, or rediscovered certain conceptions which were perhaps already ripening in his mind at the start, but which he was incapable of realizing at that time, even if he were then conscious of them. The symphony in E-flat is certainly a work of constructive tendencies, the musical thought in it is given up wholly to itself, and has no aim save its own development. But one has only to compare these pages written under the aegis of the Petersburg conservatory, with the Concerto or Piano sonata, to see clearly the abyss between academism and classicism. For the moment I wish merely to indicate that if one will notice the earliest works of Stravinsky and the eclecticism of his start, one will better understand what he is now getting at with his classicism. It might perhaps deserve the ancient phrase: Dream of youth accomplished

by the ripe man.

One might say that academism has no party, it is a language par excellence cosmopolite, and attains, in art, the ideal held up by Esperanto. Nothing is more like one conservatory than . . . another conservatory: Leipzig or Petersburg, ever the same. Admittedly, every country is eclectic and academic in its own way, but the academicians of all nations are the people of all others best constructed to come to a mutual understanding among themselves; possibly because they have very little to say to each other.

Thus the first works of Stravinsky belong to no national tradition -- unless one consider academism itself a tradition, although it has rather the nature of an ubiquitous malady. Our composer takes contact with his native land, first in the *Fire Bird*, breaking there with eclecticism never thereto to return.

What marks this ballet as national is not, as I see it, the popular turn of melodies treated by the composer, but the filiation, that is to say the *Fire Bird*, connects directly with the picturesque, descriptive, decorative style of Rimsky-Korsakov, particularly with the *Coq d'Or* and *Kastchei the Immortal*. In conformity to the canon of nearly all russo-oriental works it is based on the opposition (ballet subject here as well as the music) between the Russian world and the oriental world, the first is luminous, frank, more or less naive, trusting in its force, the force of good that will triumph; the other is confused, mysterious, full of snares and temptations, voluptuous, cruel (ancestral memories doubtless of the endless strife with the nomad mongols). After this honorific wreath offered to his teacher, Stravinsky gives up Rimsky and his friends once and for all. The only one of the Five with whom he will still from time to time take contact, is Moussorgsky. The relations between the author of *Boris*, and the author of *Noches* are fairly complex and have never yet, so far as I know, been analysed.

It might nevertheless seem at first sight as if the works of Stravinsky's second period, based on popular themes or inspired by folklore, i. e., from *Petrushka* to *Renard*, merely continue the development of the art of the Five. But this is not in the least so. Immediately after the *Fire Bird* the composer takes quite a new path, he commits the revolutionary act in the sense that he introduces into Russian music, conceptions and a style which had been up till that moment absolutely foreign to it. Stravinsky's evolution surprises us usually by its brusque turns, the sudden leaps, which seem to the spectator like so many breaks with the past; but never has the dissolution of continuity been so complete as between the *Fire Bird* and *Petrushka*. One may easily go wrong at this point, for the melodic matter treated by the composer seems to establish a sort of connecting link between the "russian" works of Stravinsky and those of his immediate predecessors. But one cannot too often

repeat that: in art it is the way a thing is made to function that counts. From *Petrushka* onward this way differs fundamentally from the procedures of Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodine, and Balakireff.

In trying to trace the national origins of Stravinsky's art the principal difficulty is not offered by *Oedipe*, but by *Petrushka*. To judge how greatly this ballet of Stravinsky's, and the works of his that follow it, differ from those of the Five, one need but compare the Fair scene in Rimsky's *The Word of the City of Kitège* with the first scene of *Petrushka*. We will analyse that difference later, For the moment suffice it to note clearly that Russian life, speaking in a general way: rites, games, beliefs, customs, costumes, special modes of thought and sensation, is and are musically realized by Stravinsky in an absolutely new and original fashion, as far removed from the picturesque and descriptive tendencies of Rimsky-Korsakov as from what one might call the "humanism" of Moussorgsky.

IV

I have tried to prove that Stravinsky's "europeanism" doesn't prevent his being profoundly national; a Russian in being "occidental" merely obeys one of the basic traditions of his race, and of his country. But looking closely, we find that the rôle of the composer of the *Sacre* in occidental musical life is very different from that which his Russian predecessors had to be content with. The forms used by Glinka, Balakireff, and their colleagues were, more or less, copies of foreign models; face to face with European masters, the Russian composers, with the exception of Moussorgsky, appeared usually as pupils, even when, as in Rimsky's case, they in their turn, gave lessons in instrumentation. Stravinsky's position is quite different; he is a creator of European forms, taking "form" in its largest sense. Borodine's innovations in European music come, as one might say, from the outside, and are not found strictly in the line of development of Western music; but Stravinsky, especially during these latter years, definitely enters that line.

Stravinsky has assimilated European musical culture, he is penetrated with its laws, with its traditions. If he modifies them, if he imposes a new orientation, he innovates not as a foreigner introducing new ideas and new procedures, but as an autochthonous entity, modifying the spirit of his *mélécw* from within. This revolutionary is the child of the land where he works, where he creates, transforming musical conceptions which belong both to it and to him. The new style which he introduces in Europe is by no means a product or "function" of the matter that he has treated for a

decade -- i. e., Russian song. Neither the polyphony of Stravinsky's art, nor its tonal structure, nor its harmonic complexity, nor its syncopated rhythms have come from Russia: all these characteristics mark the conclusion and the renewal of certain purely occidental traditions.

The Russian Stravinsky, author of the *Sacre* and of *Oedipe* is the most european, the most essentially occidental of all extant musicians, if these terms "european" and "occidental" signify a certain type of artistic culture.

Yet music is not an "international language," and to-day, in any case, it is not evolving as a sort of "sonorous fraternity." Any one who doubts this statement, might have convinced himself, especially after the war when generous efforts were made to create a sort of musical "Internationale." Such at any rate was the aim of the S. I. M. C. -- Société internationale de musique contemporaine. In the festivals organized by this society musicians of different countries learned, it is true, to know and respect each other, but they learned also their oppositions, and took clearer cognizance of their grounds for aesthetic difference, and they returned to their homes with a much keener sense of belonging to clearly determined national groups.

One of the characteristics of our epoch is the almost exaggerated development of national schools in music, each trying to affirm its own complete independence. It wd. be a delusion to swallow the idea that this exacerbated particularism can be surmounted by the creation of a cosmopolitan idiom in which all the differences wd. be mutually compensated and neutralized. It wd. scarcely be desirable, and it wd. be in any case beyond possibility. If Stravinsky has a place above these differences, if he seems to us to-day the most notable representative of the european spirit in music, it is, not because he is international, but, contrarily, because he is essentially national. His universality comes from his genius, or paraphrasing his own formula: the passport takes him over the frontiers.

FOUR CHAPTERS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY KWEI CHEN

Note: In the following sketches I do not attempt to give a complete account of my life. Inasmuch as these episodes are of my actual experience, however, they illustrate a Chinese view of life which may be regarded as authentic, if not authoritative. If my readers are not misinformed about China through my words, I shall be content.

MY BIRTH

I WAS born and brought up in a small village in the interior of China. My parents were Confucian by birth. Confucius' teachings had been the principle of life of the Chinese people for more than two thousand years before my father and mother were born, before my father's and my mother's fathers were born, and before their fathers were born.

On the third day after my birth, as I was told years after, my fond paternal grandfather came early in the morning to my father, and said: "Here I have it . . . I have it . . . the name of the boy." Carefully he took from his pocket a sheet of red paper on which he had written in his exquisite calligraphy: "Newly born male child given at Third Morning its name, Ching-yii." Instantly my father took the paper and pasted it on the family shrine. The two characters of my name mean Abundance of Joy. They are from a famous saying in The Book of History: "The family that has accumulated good deeds will reap abundance of joy from its descendants." When I entered high school, I adopted by myself the character Kwei for it was the custom in China that a student should be called by another name in school than that used at home. Kwei means literally highway; it connotes straightforwardness, a quality for which I have chosen, with varying success, to strive.

Since in China as elsewhere there are successful men, there are also men who are jealous of these. I happened to be born when my parents were in many ways prosperous. In celebrating my birth they used more firecrackers than usual, and the sound of joy stirred the jealous nature of a man in the neighbourhood. A young cousin of my mother ran to her and told her that he heard the man say: "Some day the boy will disgrace the family." My mother was very indignant at first, but laughed afterwards. She replied to her cousin: "Go and tell the man that I said my boy will be respected by all the good members of the Chen family." Here, as a rule, my mother, as she told me this story, would pause for a moment, staring at me gravely though encouragingly, and then conclude in the usual way: "Now you are growing and will be a man before long. It is for you yourself to make up your mind whether or not you will be the kind of son your mother has always hoped you would be. I shall not be able to watch you throughout your life!

MY COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

In former days before a boy began his schooling, there was a ceremony upon the occasion of his Formal Commencement of Learning. His parents took it very seriously, being careful to see that their boy should have a good start. Usually the most virtuous and most learned man among the relatives or friends of the family was asked to be the teacher on this occasion. Afterward the man became the First Teacher of the boy, standing as a pattern for the boy's life. Should the boy later distinguish himself in the province either of literature or state affairs, the townspeople would like to say: "Indeed 'Without clouds in the sky there can be no rain? He had for his First Teacher So-and-so, the most virtuous and most learned man that ever lived in our county."

Now I was to leave my mother-teacher and to be sent to a regular school. Following the ancient custom my parents planned a Commencement ceremony for me. They requested my mother's own uncle to be my First Teacher. He was a retired magistrate. When in office he had ruled his people so wisely that crimes were not committed for months at a time. It was said that within his county people did not need to bar their outer doors at night; nor would any of them take possession of what they found on the streets. They loved their magistrate for his great kindness and respected him for his strictness in enforcing the laws. On the day when he left his office the old ones leaning on the young, fathers leading their children, formed a long procession to wish him peace and safety on his way home. At the head of the procession was the huge Ten-Thousand-Names-Umbrella of bright red satin embroidered with four large characters: Magistrate's Heart Like Parent's. It was a gift to their magistrate from all the people of the county. Their names were written in tiny script on the thirty or more white satin strips hanging from the umbrella. The golden tassels gleamed while the people shouted: "Long live the Parent-Magistrate !"" Thus my mother's uncle was one of the very few who enjoyed the highest reverence in our county. Fortunate is the boy whose parents can invite such a celebrated man for his First Teacher !

My parents also took care that the day selected for the ceremony was when the Star of Literature was on duty in Heaven. Unlike the Greek Muses, the Chinese Patron of Letters is conceived as a sour-looking old man, though his appearance is not at all in conformity with his character for he is good and righteous. It is he that sees who deserve to pass the Examinations each year, and one with an ambition toward letters would indeed be unwise should he not beseech the acquaintance and protection of this venerable Star.

On the evening preceding the ceremony my mother's uncle arrived. He walked the ten miles from his home. My parents wanted to have him come in a sedan-chair, but he insisted that

"an easy walk is a chariot."

At the dinner-table he and my father conversed a great deal while they leisurely sipped old wine from small white porcelain cups. They conversed mainly of the reading of books and on being aman. My grand-uncle's voice rang like the bell in a Confucian temple which gives a tone both of peace and virility; surely his virtue was like the wine of which the quality increases with its age.

Finally rice was brought in bowls for all, and bean-cake soup was served.

"Ah!" exclaimed our retired magistrate, smiling, "bean-cake soup! It has the pastoral simplicity! The late Imperial Examiner's father used to hang on the wall of his medest library this little poem of his own composition :

"Guests come,
They are asked to dine
On salted eggs and bean-cakes.

Please forget the simple fare,
The friendship of good men is
As pure water. "

Before we left the table,

"Indeed the ancients do not deceive us," said my grand-uncle, closing the conversation. "They say: 'To read extensively and to be able to write well are second in importance for a scholar and a gentleman.' What is the real value of a man, if it is not measured by the integrity of his character and the nobleness of his mind?"

The next morning everyone in the house wore a reserved smile, Soon after breakfast two scarlet lacquer trays painted with gold were brought to the tiger-legged table in the middle of the men's parlour. In one tray were four brushes, ten ink-bricks, twenty silver dollars, and an old book. These were for my grand-uncle, The brushes were the best of their kind, ivory-tipped and each carved with four characters: White Crane Crossing Sky, symbolic of the beauty and freedom of a creative mind. The ink-bricks were from far-away Hwei-chow, and were very old, for the Chinese believe that the longer the ink-bricks are preserved, the purer will be their fragrance, even as men become wiser when they are older. The twenty silver dollars were sewed on to a red silk-covered pasteboard in four rows. The old book was of the rarest edition of the Sung dynasty (960-1276 A.D.) in the famous But-

terfly-style binding -- when the book is open, its leaves resemble the two wings of a butterfly. On the other tray were two brushes, an ink-grindstone, two ink-bricks, a small pitcher of light blue porcelain half filled with clean water, and a roll of thin writing-paper; all of them were wrapped in cheerful red. These were the gifts from my parents for me, and were to be used in this ceremony.

In the upper part of this parlour was the sanctuary of Confucius for whom we had erected a tablet inscribed in gold on a red ground. The inscription read: "The most perfect, the most sage Ancient Master Confucius -- Sacred Place." Before the tablet were a pair of large candles in their bronze holders and a triple legged brazen censer shining with a carved unicorn. The unicorn is the symbol of a Sage, who is the true friend of mankind, though men, unable to understand him, think him inauspicious because he is different from them.

Second Elder-Brother lighted the candles and the incense, and came to my father's study to announce that everything was ready. Presently my grand-uncle, my father, and two of his cousins walked toward the parlour, and I timidly followed. We were all in blue gowns and black jackets -- such was the costume of the Chinese scholar. In the parlour my grand-uncle stood on the west side, and the rest of us on the east, facing him. Then at a sign from my father I stepped upon the mat before the tablet of Confucius. In the court-yard my brother kindled a long chain of firecrackers, while I bowed, swung up and down my folded hands, kotowed, and put more incense into the censer. I did these things nervously, lest I make a mistake or forget what I had been told to do. When I came back to my place, my father, my uncles, and I bowed and swung up and down our folded hands before my grand-uncle who meantime returned us the courtesy in the same way. Now my father led me nearer to my grand-uncle, and once more I bowed, swung up and down my folded hands, and kotowed, this time to my First Teacher. Thereafter my teacher and I sat down at the table and my father and his cousins withdrew.

My teacher took a sheet of paper and wrote on it the twenty-four characters which constituted the first lesson for all schoolboys of that time. In Chinese they were in rhymed verse, of which the English adaptation is as follows:

"The great man,
Kon-fu-tze,
Educated three thousand --
Seventy became sages.
They all loved high-mindedness,
And knew the laws of propriety.
You, little student,

Never cease to learn!"

He taught me first how to read these characters one by one, then how to write them. Finally he told me to copy the lesson twice with my own hand, and went to my father's study.

"Congratulations!" I heard him say. "The literary atmosphere in your Chen clan is yet abundant. The younger generation shows conspicuously the gift which has been the happy bequest of your family for many scores of years. In the course of time we shall see that the young ones are not at all unworthy of their fathers and grandfathers."

Genial conversation, with plentiful tea, followed the ceremony. I felt I was once more newly born in a world, the glorious world of learning with Confucius as my father.

I GO TO SCHOOL

Within a fortnight after my commencement ceremony, I was in a private school about a mile from home. Carrying my books I went to school every morning and returned home before dusk. Thus I could be near my mother, and in the meantime have schooling regularly. It was early autumn, the rice was ripe, and who can withhold his joy on seeing the bright yellow grains -- the pure, bright gold -- glittering in the morning rays? Yes, they are gold, but more than gold to the farmers. They are their work, their hope, their laughter, their tears. They are their life! My heart melted with the joy of the reapers who were already singing high their

". . . humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day"

as I passed them early in the morning. I was grateful to them too, for I knew the work was hard although they seemed to enjoy it. I remembered well the couplet my mother had taught me:

"Know that each grain in your bowl
Means toil and pain."

My grandmother's nurse had also told me to regard rice as a sacred object. She said that once upon a time a young man saw a grain of cooked rice on the floor, and picked it up and ate it. Later

he won the First Place in the Palace Examination, and married the Emperor's beautiful daughter!

Throughout the season I walked on that road. I watched the first harvest begin, and saw the last one finished. Throughout the season I noticed none but cheerful faces; even when they went home in the evening after a long day's toil, they did not appear weary. "The poor, ignorant Chinese farmers!" The good European and American missionaries find themselves eloquent on the subject when talking to their pious countrymen. Yes, poor the Chinese farmers are, and ignorant. But as for the soul, theirs, it seems to me, is the most highly blessed by Heaven.

For myself, I was not without occupation. In the morning I played with the dewdrops on the leaves of the wild plants along the country road; in the evening I listened to the sunset melodies of the birds and insects, and tried to harmonize them with my own untutored songs when no one was near me. In three months I became very familiar with the large stones in the middle of the road. I had counted them many times, and remembered the particular hues of some for a long time. Ah! the rising sun, the evening-red clouds, the happy reapers...Was it not yesterday that I saw them all?

The next year I was again in the country school when the villagers were singing:

"Having passed the Half of the First Moon,

Last year's dead weeds now we burn.
Men and boys start their ploughing and schooling,
Women and girls their spinning and weaving."

I had now come to live there, hoping that I could save the time which I had spent with nature and my mother, for more books. It was my mother's idea. Although I did not like it, I took pride in obeying her and in being always willing to learn more. But the first month away from home and from my mother was very trying. For the rigidity in the old method of Chinese schools was mortal enemy to a child's nature. Many a time I had determined to flee back to my mother -- to have but a moment's glimpse of her, which would immediately cure the hunger of my soul...But I never could gather sufficient courage to execute my determination, for to flee from school was too degrading for me, and I knew that my mother would scold me for doing that, however much she might like to see me. To permit her boy to neglect his school work or

to encourage him to think of anything but books would be as bad as to allow him to gamble. I had heard my mother say so. Gradually I learned to submit to Fate, finding no other way advisable.

The daily program recurs now vividly to my mind. Every morning (there was no Sunday then) as the day was breaking, our teacher would come into the class-room and give us each a new lesson. We were to study it and read it aloud, then recite it, one by one, standing beside our teacher but facing in the opposite direction. Each was to finish his lesson before he could have breakfast.

One morning my mind happened to have gone home to my longed-for mother; I besought her to ignore the severe tradition and take me home just for a little while -- a day or so...Here, of course, in my mind I had said much more than I would have dared to say in her presence. While I was half dreaming,

"Study!" our teacher called out, slapping the table; "don't you want breakfast?" It was for me.

I went back and forth several times from my seat to our teacher's to recite my lesson, but could not succeed in a satisfactory manner. At length all but me had left the room for breakfast and I was alone with the teacher. He became more impatient; I, more fearful.

"Concentrate your mind on the lesson," he said as he left the room, "and be ready to recite it when I come back."

Oh, what humiliation! The empty room pricked the boy's heart. The whole world was dark and cruel to him. Yet, he could not hate his teacher because he had been taught that he should always revere him; he could not hate his parents because he knew that they were doing all for his good; he could not hate himself because he saw no wrong on his part except his desire to see his mother. He then upbraided the Great Maker who had brought him into this weary world without his previous consent.

How could I study! My heart was burning as a wild fire; my head aching; tears bursting forth. I did not know what the teacher might do to me, but I was determined to receive whatever punishment he might inflict. My Second Elder-Brother was the first to return. He said nothing, but joined me in weeping. Then our teacher came back. I paid no attention to him and with my hands on the desk cushioning my head, wept anew.

"What is the matter with you to-day?" my teacher asked in a half angry tone. "Has a blue-eyed, red-bearded man carried off your mind?"

"Don't think you are here studying for me!" he continued, puffing at his long bamboo-root pipe, ivory-mouthed, with a shining brass bowl. "I don't care whether or not you study if you prefer to be ignorant. Nor would your parents care much, if you were not their son."

The teacher's words sounded reasonable. "Yes," thought I, "a

student must model after a good farmer. He goes barefooted working in the flooded fields, while the water is yet very cold. On an extremely hot summer day, he works, out in his field in the burning heat, while the rest of us stay inside the house. Yes, the farmer works hard and steadily toward a definite end. When autumn comes; when the green tassels are turning into pure, bright gold, he watches them as a lover would gaze at his beloved -- the more he gazes at her the more beautiful she becomes. He is delighted. He is rewarded. Yes, I must devote myself to studying, as a farmer to working, so I too shall reap. Were I like a lazy man, a do-nothing -- Lo! haven't I seen beggars wander hither and thither, homeless and forlorn, like withered leaves blown by the west wind, tasting dust? Should I, then, disgrace myself, disgrace my mother, disgrace the whole family?' I felt my ears and cheeks burn, and my heart beat violently. The contrast was as distinct as that between day and night. Gradually my heart was softened.

As I was wondering how I should change my attitude without injuring my pride, our teacher's wife entered the room. She begged her husband to excuse me from the whole morning's duty. When he gave his consent, she caught me by my shoulder, saying: "You are to play chess with me after breakfast. Let us go."

According to our daily program the first thing after breakfast was a review of the lessons of the preceding five days, and then the lessons of the five days preceding those. At eleven we would have tea and home-made cookies. The rest of the morning was to be devoted to cultivating calligraphy. In the afternoon our work began with one more new lesson for the day. Then we were to punctuate by ourselves the comments on the Classics, while reading them in silence. As the sun was sinking toward the horizon we opened our books of poetry and chanted our favourite verses, our bodies swaying and our hearts expanding.

About half an hour before dusk, the class was dismissed. My brother and I would stand by the door and watch the road leading toward home: perhaps a messenger was coming from our mother!

The evening was wholly for essay reading. The essays were of historical criticism and philosophical interpretation. Occasionally our teacher would begin a discourse, and How to Live a Manly

Life took the place of a mother's lullaby. Finally everyone departed to sweet slumber.

THE FIVE CYPRESSES

Because only a few people, a selected few, ever went to my Eleventh Uncle, and because of the quietness of the place and the orderly life the family lived, his house was called by the villagers The Secular Temple. From a distance one could see in the front yard five large cypress-trees forming a screen for the house. The cypress is well liked by the Chinese for its shape which is that of a Chinese brush, the symbol of creativeness, as well as for its being ever green. My uncle had named his house The Five Cypresses, alluding to his five children, two sons and three daughters, after the example of the poet Tao Chien of the Chin dynasty (265-419 A. D.), who had before his house five willows and called himself Mr Five Willows.

When one approached the Great Door, one read on the right: Literature to Serve the Kingdom; on the left: Honesty to Bequeath to Descendants. The characters were inscribed in black on two crimson boards symmetrically hung on the two sides of the door. They were written by a distant relative of ours who, according to the rumour, passed his Examinations of the Province by his calligraphy, because the Examiner liked his penmanship better than his composition. I heard people say that my grand-uncle, my First Teacher since my Commencement ceremony, actually saw this comment of the Chief Examiner made at the end of our distant relative's composition: "His composition is commonplace, but in calligraphy he is exalted above all." In a way it is maddening to have such a reputation, but our relative was compensated by a handsome income of two or three thousand dollars a year which he earned by writing inscriptions for the stores in the city.

The Five Cypresses was built in the year when I was born. Before that my Eleventh Uncle had lived under the same roof with his three brothers and nine cousins in the house built by my great grandfather. As the members of the family increased, there was an increasing call for tact and patience from each in order to maintain harmony among them. My Eleventh Aunt, his wife, was of a very sensitive temperament. Though she always appeared to be pleasant in the presence of her relatives, she often shed tears to my mother in whom alone she confided. She had not learned how to please people she said, and she did not wish to please those who had ill-used her merely because she was one of the younger sisters-in-law. My mother would console her, saying: "The best protection from the Lengthy-tongued is to be deaf. Your mind will not be disturbed when you hear nothing, our wise men say.

If I happen to hear people talk about me, I walk away as soon as I can. I pursue the right path, I sit on the correct seat, I say to myself: what is there in me that may not be talked about? The public is a mirror; it reflects clearly everything. They who accuse us falsely will be laughed at by the good." But my aunt did not suffer any the less from certain woman members in the family. It was her nature, she told my mother pathetically.

After I was born, my Eleventh Uncle came to my father one day and said: "Fourth Elder-Brother, I have decided to build a new house some half mile from here. Now you have three sons. You will need more rooms sooner or later. Do you not wish to have my portion of this house? . . . You know I can no longer remain and be happy. . . ." He was depressed. My father knew, of course, the cause. He agreed to buy from him in case he really wanted to leave the house.

My Eleventh Uncle and his family moved to their new house, The Five Cypresses, on the New Year's Eve of that year. There they had lived happily for almost ten years when suddenly my aunt died. In order to divert his attention from his deep grief, my father asked him if he would not take my Second Elder-Brother and me as his pupils. He consented. My brother and I went to live in his house as soon as the Half of the First Moon had passed.

The last time I had been there was for my aunt's funeral. The signs of mourning were still there. On the two crimson boards at the Great Door were pasted several strips of white paper. My uncle's daughters braided their hair with white thread; his sons wore white shoes. For according to the Confucian code the Chinese sons and daughters were required to wear the signs of mourning for their parents for two years. The first seven weeks after their parent's death, the sons were not allowed either to shave or to cut their hair, and they were not to go out of their own house. During their two years' mourning, they could not marry, nor could they take the Examinations. In case they were officials, they had to resign; they could return to their post only with some special excuse. Although the Republic has abandoned by law these ancient customs, they are still in practice among the conservatives though in a modified manner.

My uncle's study and library occupied the rear part of his house, and the room for my brother and me was adjacent. All the windows faced the flower-garden. Above the entrance of the study were four characters inscribed in bright green on a horizontal yellow board: "Only the Learned Enter." Opposite it, above the door opening to the library there was a similar inscription in different characters: "Books Are Here Revered." On the two doors of a specially made bookcase a couplet was carved in relief with

raised gold on a red ground:

"Enveloping the Entire Universe;
Preserving Past and Present."

Of all the paintings my uncle valued a piece by Cheng Benchou most highly. It was one of Rock and Bamboos, the favourite theme of the painter. There was on it also a quatrain of the artist's own composition written in his peculiar calligraphy. The English of the poem reads:

"Grey, grey there stands the Solitary Rock;
Straight, aspiring, the several Bamboos.
Their beauty no one is to know;

They dwell in a remote vale, concealed."

There was a clear-water pond in my uncle's garden. The garden had also a name. It was The Reflection of Red Clouds. My uncle called himself the Master of the Reflection of Red Clouds Garden, his pseudonym for his poetical works.

The name of the garden was inscribed on the garden wall, each of the three characters as large as one yard square. Under the inscription was a sketch by my uncle himself, expressing his view of nature and life in relation to the place of the garden in a home. He ended it with a couplet:

FANG LING-YU

"In the empty rooms -- leisure and deep stillness;
In the wood and garden -- no worldly passions."

There were other couplets in large characters on the garden walls. I have always remembered the one written by my mother's brother in the bird-like script:

"For the beauty of the flowers, in spring early to rise;
In love with the moon, in autumn late to bed."

EVENING BELLS

BY FANG LING-YU

Translated From the Chinese by Kwei Chen

The evening bells are ringing . . .
Words of divine talk . . .
For whom?

The moon is round and bright . . .
But the Garden of Renown
Stands silent.

Wind blows . . .
Leaves fall at my feet . . .

In my light coat
I walk in the cold...

Alone...
Above my head --
Tears shining . . .

POETRY AND CULTURE

BY WITTER BYNNER

THE Navajo Indians are supposed to be able, with concerted incantation, to make corn or cactus grow by the minute instead of by the month. Around the seedling they hold a screen of blankets, while they sing their spell. When they move away, the seedling is a few inches high. And so it goes, spell by spell, until the plant or flower is complete. I have seen their ritual and am a disbeliever. This kind of magic is for children, young or old, so credulous of miracle in the outside world that they will always lend themselves to the sorcerer. Poetry is another kind of magic.

A true poet is supposed to make a flower of life grow in the heart, It may be a flower of good, it may be a flower of evil. It may be the morning-glory, it may be the deadly nightshade. The true poets are the priests of the inner miracle, and I have seen their ritual, and I believe. There is all the difference in the world between these flowers in the heart and the flowers of paper or wax, or even metal, which are fabricated by the craftsman. Dust gathers fast on the flowers of the craftsman, but the inner flowers are fadeless, and breathe their own clarity.

Like most of us who have been schooled in this western world, I was afforded in my youth a study of culture flowing mainly from two sources, the Greek and the Hebrew. I had come to feel that poetic literature must contain streams from one or the other of these two sources: on the one hand the clean objective symmetrical athletic beauty of the Greek, on the other hand the turgid subjective distorted elaborated beauty of the Hebrew. Like my fellow students, I had been offered nothing of the literatures of the Far East. I am still doubtful that I could ever feel any real adherence to the ornate and entranced literature of India; but I have come by accident into as close touch with Chinese poetry as a westerner is able to come without a knowledge of the Chinese tongue. And I feel with conviction, that in the matter of poetry I have begun to receive a new, finer, and deeper education than ever came to me from the Hebrew or the Greek.

Centuries ago, cultivated Chinese had reached the intellectual saturation which has tired the mind of the modern European. The Chinese gentleman knew the ancient folk-songs, compiled by Confucius. He knew also, all about him, a profoundly rich civilization, a more poised and particularized sophistication than we westerners have yet attained. Through the Asian centuries, everyone has written verse. In fact, from early imperial days down to these even worse disordered days of the republic, the sense of poetry has lasted among the Chinese people as a natural and solacing part of life. Whether or not the individual may form or enjoy his poetry in metrical shape, he is constantly aware of the kinship between the beauty of the world and the beauty of imaginative phrase. On any Chinese mountain-climb toward a temple, rock after rock with its terse and suggestive inscription will bear witness to this temper. So will the street-cries of the peddlers, or the names of the tea-houses, and, on many hilltops and lakesides, the casual but reverent jottings of this or that anonymous appreciator of natural beauty. When Whitman said, "To have great poets there must be great audiences too," he must have had in the back of his mind enriched generations like the Elizabethan in England -- or like almost any generation in China. In those great audiences, each man, to the limit of his capacity and with natural ease, was a poet.

There is a simple secret in these generations. It is told in a pamphlet written by a venerable Chinese scholar still living in Peking, and still with infinite passion adhering to the precepts of his ancestors, and with infinite patience, acceptably expressed by the way among foreigners, adhering to his conviction that foreigners impair the health of China. His name is Ku Hung-ming. His pamphlet, written in English, one of the five languages of which he is master, is called *The Spirit of the Chinese People*. He sees the reason for the eternal youth of the Chinese people in the fact that the average Chinese has managed to maintain within himself the head of a man and the heart of a child. On this brief he is absorbingly interesting, explaining the continuance of Chinese culture, the only ancient culture still racially existent. My immediate concern with his brief is more special. I detect in it something that he does not specify: a reason for the continuance of poetry alive among his people, and, more than that, the best reason I know for the existence of poetry anywhere among cultured races

Music may be the most intimate of the arts, I am not sure. Except for simple melodies, music is beyond the reach of any individual who is not a technician. Painting and sculpture are obviously arts expressing themselves in single given objects, which, although they may be copied and so circulated, are for the most part accessible only to the privileged, or to those who make pilgrimages. Poetry, more than any other of the arts, may be carried about by a man either in his own remembering heart, or else in compact and easily available printed form. It belongs to any one. It is of all the arts the closest to a man; and it will so continue to be, in spite of the apparent shocks given it by the noises of modern commerce and science and jazz.

It has been an age-old custom in China that poets, even the best of them, should devote their earlier years to some form of public service. Century after century, Chinese poems reflect this deep devotion of their authors to the good of the state -- their unwavering allegiance to righteousness, even when it meant demotion or exile or death. In these modern western times, there have been periods when poetry has seemed to be a candle-lit and closeted occupation. I venture to surmise that poetry written in that sort of atmosphere grows with time less and less valid, less and less noticed. As a matter of fact, the outstanding English poets have been acutely concerned with the happiness of their fellow-men, and have given themselves warmly to public causes in which they believed. Similarly, present-day poets in America, with amazingly few exceptions, have clustered to the defence of noble souls at bay like Eugene Debs, or have been quick to protest against doubtful justice as in the case of Sacco and Vanzetti. This sort of zeal may not result in poetry of a high order immediately connected with the specific cause; but there is no question that, but for this bravery, this heat on behalf of man's better nature, there would not be in

the hearts of the poets so fine a crucible for their more personal alchemies.

Let me say a general word as to the characteristic method of the best Chinese poetry. I am not referring to the technical tricks by which a Chinese poet makes his words balanced and melodious. The discovery which has largely undone my previous convictions as to the way of writing poetry has rather to do with use of substance than with turns of expression. Mencius said long in reference to the Odes collected by Confucius, "'Those who explain the Odes, must not insist on one term so as to do violence to a sentence, nor on a sentence so as to do violence to the general scope. They must try with their thoughts to meet that scope, and then they will apprehend it.'" In the poetry of the west we are accustomed to let our appreciative minds accept with joy this or that passage in a poem -- to prefer the occasional glitter of a jewel to the straight light of the sun. The Chinese poet seldom lets any portion of what he is saying unbalance the entirety. Moreover, with the exception of a particular class of writing -- adulatory verse written for the court -- Chinese poetry rarely trespasses beyond the bounds of actuality. Whereas western poets will take actualities as points of departure for exaggeration or fantasy, or else as shadows of contrast against dreams of unreality, the great Chinese poets accept the world exactly as they find it in all its terms, and with profound simplicity find therein sufficient solace. Even in phraseology they seldom talk about one thing in terms of another, but are able enough and sure enough as artists to make the ultimately exact terms become the beautiful terms. If a metaphor is used, it is a metaphor directly relating to the theme, not something borrowed from the ends of the earth. The metaphor must be concurrent with the action or flow of the poem; not merely superinduced, but an integral part both of the scene and the emotion.

Wordsworth of our poets comes closest to the Chinese; but their poetry cleaves even nearer to nature. They perform the miracle of identifying the wonder of beauty with common sense. Or rather, they prove that the simplest common sense, the most salutary, and the most nearly universal, is the sense of the beauty of nature, quickened and yet sobered by the wistful warmth of human friendship.

For our taste, used as we are to the operatic in poetry, the substance of Chinese poems seems often mild or even trivial ; but if we will be honest with ourselves and with our appreciation of what is lastingly important, we will find these very same poems to be momentous details in the immense patience of beauty. They are the heart of an intimate letter. They bring the true, the beautiful, the everlasting, into simple easy touch with the human, the homely, and the immediate. And I predict that future western poets will go to school with the masters of the T'ang Dynasty, as well as

with the masters of the Golden Age of Greece, or with the Hebrew prophets, or with the English dramatists or romanticists -- to learn how best may be expressed, for themselves and others, that passionate patience which is the core of life.

It is not necessary that culture bring about the death of poetry, as it did in the Rome of Virgil. The cynics are wrong who see in our future no place for an art which belongs, they say, to the childhood of the race. The head of a man and the heart of a child working together as in the Chinese have made possible with one race, and may make possible with any race, even in the thick of the most intricate culture, the continuance of the purest poetry. --

I WROTE UPON YOUR HEART

BY HELEN BAKER PARKER

I wrote upon your heart; but now I write no more.
My folded hands are ivory upon my breast.
In yellowed satin, with the little waist I wore
So long ago, is this my quiet body dressed.

I wrote my name upon your heart. Now I am done.
My word shall know effacement in a little while.
Red moons will not remind you, or the rising sun,
And you will cease to wonder at my graven smile.

I smile -- Years after I am scattered to the light
Your heart, washed by the acid of some bitter day,
Will shed the feeble lines another one will write
And I, forgotten, shall appear. I shall not stay;
Others will write. But sometimes, underneath, my name
Will stir, though I am ashes, wrapping you in flame.

GAMBIT ENDING

BY DON LOCHBILER

In the angling rain
the grey rocks moved again,
leaves fell like cast skins.

Memory's lash escaped
the crusted eye, kept

clean the thirsting roots.
The tree her slender thoughts

found no satiety
of hand or leaf,
live twig or finger's teem
or vessel's flame.

Clawing light

coiled with glass,
shaving wind

turned shafts of grass.

Half of the hollow
wind went free,
wedge of no arrow
cleft the tree,

only the core

of the stream returned
when the dust destroyed,
when the water burned,

after the marriage
of leaf and stone
filling the turf
and the tree with sound,

rutting the earth
a shadowy road,
weeping the death
of the fretted god.

ITALIAN LETTER
RAFFAELLO PICCOLI

September, 1928

FRANCESCO FLORA'S first novel, *La Citta Terrena*, has attracted the attention of critics and of the reading public almost at the same time with that other first novel, Bacchelli's *Diavolo al Pontelungo*; but while the latter book has been welcomed with unanimity of tranquil admiration, the former has met with extravagant and dithyrambic praise in some quarters, and in others with fierce opposition. It would be malicious, however, to try to attribute the difference to the fact that Flora is a militant and outspoken critic of contemporary literature, and therefore subject to either gratitude or resentment from his colleagues, while Bacchelli is a kind of literary recluse; the true reason is deeper, and lies in the nature of their work, since the *Diavolo*, as I tried to show in my last letter, 'being the fruit of the calm and detached contemplation of the past, is not coloured by any other passion than a purely aesthetic one, by any other interest than a general human interest arising from the varied spectacle of mortal life in every time and place -- but *La Citta Terrena* is the idealized confession of the joys and sorrows, of the errors and hopes of a passionate child of our times.

Some years ago I introduced Flora to the readers of The Dial as a critic and a poet: they may remember that I wrote of him especially in connexion with his book *Dal Romanticismo al Futurismo*, which also, though disguised as a sweeping survey of modern Italian literature, is the confession of a personal and intimate experience of intellectual and moral life. In rapid succession, after a few years of silence, he has given us a book on D'Annunzio, this novel, and a book on Croce. His earlier work had consisted in a reducing of the dispersed and chaotic pre-war literary life to the intellectual and moral norm of Croce's Idealism: these new critical essays might well be considered as its epilogomena, placing D'Annunzio and Croce, in sharp opposition to each other, as the two poles of the present moral life of our country. Flora's critical interests are identical with his ideals as a poet and as a novelist: the whole of his literary activity is in fact guided by one thought which provides at the same time a rule of conduct and a criterion of truth, that might be defined as the thought of a progressive and perpetual ascent from the world of mere matter and sense -- from what is disorganic and lawless -- to a world in which sense and matter are not mortified and annulled, but transfigured as aspects of a wider and higher life and stamped with the impress of its spiritual law.

The novel presents in an imaginative form the theme which finds its speculative and historical development in the critical writings, and the close connexion between the two modes of elaboration is still more clearly emphasized by the author's choosing a poet as the hero of the novel: a dangerous choice in any case, because of the possible confusion of the hero with the author, and of the ob-

jective and poetic tone with the autobiographical and practical. The ideal image of a poet, as of any rare individuality, can never be made to appear wholly plausible and real unless it is supported by historical data; and even then, the heroic character of a poet lies always entirely in his work, and only by exception in his daily life. A poet's significant history is his poetry, since no man becomes a poet except by abstracting himself from his biography and from the practical communion of men, and by creating in that sphere in which he is no longer the man of passions and desires, but a pure organ of aesthetic vision: the personality of a poet springs from the sacrifice of his individuality. Therefore the poets of fiction can never be possessed, as poets, with full concrete life. Their poetic quality being supposed and not actual, what remains in a novel (witness the favourable instance, because not unsupported by historical data, of that clever novel, Maurois' *Ariel*) is but a pale, shadowy figure, half man or less, with all the vices of the sentimentalist, dilettante, or epicurean. Such are the considerations, I believe, which afford some justification for the charge against Flora by some of his critics, that he, though himself keenly aware of the weakness of D'Annunzio's ethical vision, should have now invested the world of his own imagination with a sensuous atmosphere reminiscent possibly of the heavy scents and warm animal breaths of the older poet's novels.

But those critics have not been subtle enough to perceive that Flora's sensuousness, though at times overpowering and almost cloying, remains on a plane totally different from that of D'Annunzio, never going so deep as to affect and corrupt the quality of the aesthetic vision. In fact, the whole of D'Annunzio's work might be looked upon as a series of new *Metamorphoses* in which man, retracing the stages represented in ancient mythology by deities partaking of two natures, the Fauns, the Tritons, the Centaurs, aspires towards the condition of the animal and of the plant, of the rock and of the sea; in which, as it were, the human spirit, renouncing its divine prerogative, strives to become all and only Nature. Flora, on the contrary, is firmly rooted -- not as a thinker only, but as a poet -- in the Idealistic position which submerges the whole natural world in the human and divine spirit, in the perpetual miracle of the spirit that creates out of its own substance the object of its contemplation and the conditions of its activity. Of the moral dangers to which a hasty transposition of this speculative doctrine into the world of practical experience may easily lead, no one, I think, is more acutely conscious than Flora himself, and his novel could be summarized as a kind of pilgrimage of the spirit, questing after the infinite wealth of which it knows itself to be the creator, then losing itself in the maze of that infinite wealth as in the "*selva selvaggia ed aspra e forte*" of the Mediaeval Pilgrim, and finally returning to itself humbled and restored within its individual limits by the double evidence of the unreflecting and instinctive morality of simple souls, and of the

omnipotence of death.

The whole life-experience of Giuliano Solari, the hero of *La Citta Terrena*, culminates in two episodes, if the word be allowed its original meaning and dignity: a woman in love with him finds, through love for her child, the strength to resist his love and is afterwards punished by her child's death, for the sin she has not committed; another woman dies in his arms when he goes back to her after trials and errancy, and the poet is left with a child born of her. It is through this doctrine of the actuality of the spirit, in which he had first found support for his amoralism and super-humanism, that Solari becomes conscious at last of his individual moral responsibility for all that lives and dies around him:

"In the certainty of his thought he found himself again, since it is better to live in sorrow, and even to have wept for desires that had been killed, and for a dead love, if he had seen joy, if his soul could be tenderly moved by the innocence of his child, by the white head of his mother, if poetry throbbed and blossomed within him again: since it is better to live, better to be transfigured in death, than never to have been born. And he said to his heart: If this is not the voice of the only and true God, certainly He shall speak to the expectant soul, and I shall hear His word of light. Thus Giuliano Solari resumed his life."

The novel ends on this promise rather than in discovery of a new faith, of that religion of our time of which we all know the prophets and precursors, but which still awaits its messiah and its gospel.

The book is new, a book of and for our day, not only because a vision of the world, in a sense the flower of contemporary European culture, finds in it culmination and renovation, but also because its method, the images it employs, the sensitivity which it represents, are closely akin to the sources and modes of expression of the few young writers who in France, in England, in Germany, and in America, are endeavouring to create a language adequate to the complexity of modern experience. Flora does not imitate these writers: as a critic, he tends to regard somewhat scornfully, those he has read ; but he is as alert as they are to that "qualité d' ubiquité de la vie moderne" which the distinguished French author already mentioned describes as the common subject-matter of "la jeune littérature" in France and in England; and similarity of conditions and of interests is after all bound to produce effects if not similar at least closely related. Flora's modernity, however, should not be confused with that rhetoric of literary modernism which is developing in Europe and in America -- a limited and peculiar choice of subjects, that is to say; a marked preference for certain states of mind; tricks of language, of grammar, of punctuation, recurrent with slight variations, in all modern literatures, as signals of the

truly modern writer. American readers who wish to see the Italian aspect of this international phenomenon ought to read the new magazine "goo" (meaning, of course, the twentieth century) which was issued last year in Rome and Paris, under the editorship of Massimo Bontempelli, containing original contributions by Mac Orlan, Soupault, Fargue, Ribemont-Dessaignes, Cendrars, and other young French writers, and French translations from McAlmon, Kaiser, Joyce, Gomez de la Serna, but especially from Bontempelli himself and a few other Italians like Cecchi, Aniante, Alvaro, Solari, and Barilli.

I may have occasion, in some future letter, to write more particularly about some of these writers, but suffice it to say that Bontempelli, who started his career with a volume of well-tempered, classically modelled, almost scholastic verse has, through a phase of violent futurism, reached his present position as a kind of leader of the modernistic movement. A literary virtuoso, a temper sensitive to the rapidly changing tastes and moods of successive generations -- since generations, if not epochs, seem now to be succeeding each other at a distance of not more than two or three years, one at the heels of the other -- he has now and then been able to strike a note, if not original, certainly happy, as in a series of grotesque and humorous short stories, which are among the best produced in Italy in a genre substantially foreign to our national temperament. His later literary tendencies, as shown even by the editorial plan of the "goo," were bound to make him favour a sort of literary internationalism, since those peculiarly modern aspects of our life, which he now considers the only possible sources of inspiration for a present-day writer, are common to the whole of western civilization, and are rather more prominent in other western countries than in Italy. It has been easy for his adversaries to bring against him the charge of being at variance with the prevailing, officially countenanced, tendencies of our national culture, and the term *Stracitta* -- meaning over-emphasis on the mechanical, artificial, cosmopolite elements of modern life -- has been invented and thrown at his head by an eyrie of younger writers, self-styled inhabitants of *Strapaese*, the Italian village par excellence, in which the solid virtues as well as the solid vices of our race are supposed still to exist for the inspiration of thoroughly indigenous authors.

This literary guerrilla is fairly hard to follow in its intricacies, because, even to an outsider, it is evidently complicated by motives of a merely practical nature. Bontempelli has given up his international "goo," and is now issuing it in Rome in Italian; and has associated himself with nine more writers of a more or less established reputation, among whom are Marinetti and Fausto Maria Martini, the group known as "I Dieci," who are writing a novel in collaboration, establishing prizes for new authors, and trying generally to gain for the literary profession in Italy a status more dignified and self-sustaining than that it has had hitherto. His

adversaries, on the other hand, have succeeded in getting hold of our most important literary weekly, La Fiera Letteraria, published in Milan, and have waged a vehement campaign against the Dieci and all their methods and enterprises. Both groups seem to be doing their utmost to secure the monopoly of official support, but the outcome of all their alarms and excursions is not to be easily predicted.

Some more thoughtful writers, in the same *Fiera Letteraria*, have recently introduced new arguments in the polemic between Modernism and Traditionalism, stating, rather surprisingly to me, that what we are suffering from is too much intelligence. Personally I should have thought that any charge but this particular one might have been brought against the majority of our writers of fiction. What goes by the name of intelligence among them is merely a dose of natural wits that would be often deemed insufficient for the average business man or politician; it is amazing, on the contrary, that men living in an atmosphere saturated with the consciousness of critical and historical problems, should remain intellectually so innocent. But the accusation has a meaning if we interpret it as pointing to the excess of programmatic and voluntary elements in modern fiction over the spontaneous and creative; it has a meaning if we apply it, for instance, to Pirandello and to his so-called philosophy, which in reality is no philosophy at all but a chaos of undigested psychological paradoxes, which yet succeeds in vitiating and falsifying the modicum of native inspiration that even his sharpest critics do not deny him. But if the author of this particular charge, who is a young critic of some distinction, Gino Saviotti, had been better trained in the use of critical terms, he would not have said intelligence when he meant intellectualism, a vice born not of too much intelligence (inconceivable when speaking of positive virtues or qualities) but of too little; and he would not have chosen as an illustration for his thesis, Giraudoux, a writer in whom a keen and delicate wit or esprit is exquisitely exploited for the creation of an elegant and subtle, ironic and elegiac, *marivaudage* or suite of variations in sordina, on the sweetness and sadness, the heartlessness and pathos, of these our too modern times.

That intelligence should necessarily kill poetry is a curious misapprehension, though partly justified by the truism that many minor poets have belonged and belong to the intellectually minus habentes. But the only possible measure for the higher poetry is that determined by breadth of moral consciousness and height of intelligence in the poet. Years ago, in my Cambridge days, I made a close study of the chronology of Dante's *Canzoniere*, and was able to discover stages of lyrical development marked by successive broadenings of intellectual outlook, while poetical inspiration seemed to lag, as being for a time insufficient to enkindle the new matter; then suddenly, with a leap of the flame, it took possession of the wider world presenting itself to the poet, the stages leading

him gradually from the juvenile sonnets of the Vita Nuova to the miraculous tercets of the Divina Commedia, where they can still be traced in lyrical ascent from the Inferno to the Paradiso; but the conclusion holds true that only minor poetry can be killed by intelligence, and that great poetry can grow only on the soil of a great intelligence.

These considerations may have brought us a little too far from the quarrels and programmes of which we were speaking; but not so far as might seem from Francesco Flora, who is familiar with this mode of thought, being at the same time an intelligent man and apoet. And with him I leave the reader, extracting from La Citta Terrena a passage which, though losing in translation and out of its context, may perhaps make him feel the quality of a style both modern and traditional:

"And yet, to travel, to multiply space, what a primitive thing it still is! Sailing day after day to touch the edge of the earth, sinking into sand month after month to gain the edge of the desert, while our thought is wholly without barriers of distance or of time, while, even to-day, a sound can be made synchronous to our ears and to those of a negro at the furthest confines of the desert, and of a sailor in mid-ocean! Thus voice conquers matter and space: one man's work has sufficed to accelerate sound-waves, to make them simultaneous at the most various distances. The supreme contemporaneity of earthly things is the destruction of matter; or, better, the redeeming of it to a human, and therefore divine, condition. How shall we not conquer even the weight of our bodies, that mere thought may take us anywhere by an act of the will?"

BOOK REVIEWS

NEW LIVES OF OLD POETS

Catulus and Horace, Two Poets in Their Environment. By Tenney Frank. 8vo. 291 pages. Henry Holt and Company. \$3.

FROM another critic the sub-title, "two poets in their environment," might well be a warning. Taine's insistence on the rather obvious importance of literary "milieu"? has too often in criticism been the excuse for much detail that has no literary bearing; and we still have too much crude sociology heaped about

poetry. But here is really a study of poets; it bears constantly on their poetry ; and it writes their chapters in the history of literature. This is the focus of the archaeology that has lately become an adventure as well as a science; of the metric, and even the occasional grammar, rescued from the pedants; of the social history, yielding significant dates; above all, of a biography that is neither chronicle nor psychopathy.

The superficial contrast between Catullus the "pure" lyrist and Horace the "reflective" lyrist is ignored with many other critical labels. There is no attempt to tell us again the correct things to say about two famous poets. The appraisal of achievement is sometimes even destructive. Horace's ninth epode "has not a single good line or phrase, though it presents an interesting picture" (189). Again, "his ten years of literary effort thus produced only three rolls, and half of this might well have been omitted" (192). But the few cases of destructive re-appraisal are merely incidental to a fresh discrimination. *The Epistle to the Pisos* "must not be read as Horace's full expression of his poetic creed" (261). "It was not meant to be what later writers have chosen to call it, an 'Art of Poetry'" (275). Such distinctions throw into relief what in each poet is characteristic and significant, and make appraisal subservient to literary history.

The recent revival, for all its vagaries, has reminded us that biography is a fine art. It demands suggestive interpretation of patiently verified facts in relation to the development of individuality; and the development of a poet is too delicate to be summarized in easy generalizations.

"When Horace's father in the prime of life closed his bank and invested what seemed a meager fortune in order to live on the returns so as to devote the rest of his days to the education of his only boy, he had done a very uncommon thing. He was not an ordinary man. That Horace never forgot. To him it was not trite to say that wealth is dangerous, that it is well to limit one's getting, that there are spiritual values worth more, that natural desires may as well be curbed. When Horace speaks in this fashion and laughs at Rome's behavior, he is remembering his father . . . and he is also parting company with the practical creed of Maecenas and most of the powerful men of Rome" (183).

The larger environment, the pressure of the time on the man, is adjusted expertly. There is none of that laborious digest of history which makes many biographies both dull and unconvincing. © Horace's "un-Roman interest in merchants and men of affairs" (135) is derived in a paragraph. Two pages create the human scene of the boy Catullus. The sharpest challenge to this art must have been the difficult but necessary figure of Clodia. That this too-famous

lady was the "Lesbia" of Catullus may be dismissed with easy cynicism, or expatiated into either racy description or tragic irony. Here, instead of either of these evasions, is a really biographical relation at once precise and delicate. Clodia and her society, made to reveal each other, are together woven into the story of Catullus.

"She read much in an age when literature was made for men, and she took an interest in her younger brother's ambitions and acquired a taste for political intrigue" (15). "Cicero, despite his hatred of her, constantly refers to her lustrous eyes" (17). His defence of Caelius "threw the onus on Clodia. The speech seethes with innuendo . . . contingent and concessive clauses that would protect him in case of cross-examination...Caelius was acquitted, and Clodia lost the last shred of her reputation" (80).

Such suggestive phrases, like the "bachelor diction" (219) of Horace, are not patches; they all mark the unfolding pattern. So are those details of the history which are more specifically literary; the actual artistic use of the Greek Anthology, the relation of the revolt against Ciceronian oratory not only to the fall of the Senate, but to the clash of artistic ideals in poetry, the traditional sense of the soil in Horace's references to peasant cults, the deviation of drama into recitation. Even the famous four lines beginning "Qualis in aerii perlucens vertice montis" are made to yield fresh suggestion by reminding us of similar anticipations in the English eighteenth century.

"It is one of the most striking landscapes in Latin verse, and may be a reminiscence of one of the many capricious cascades high on the mountain side that one passes in the Adige valley as one travels north from Verona to Trent...Had Catullus written fifty years later, after the mountain folk had been pacified so that the Alps were made accessible to Roman travellers, he might well have discovered mountain landscape as a theme for poetry" (47).

Metric, always essential in the study of poetry, has often been obscured in presentation. From age to age it has been stiffened by pedagogues and disputed by theorists. Here the technical precision without which the study must be idle, and may be misleading, is both guided by reminders of fundamental distinctions and enlivened by analogies.

"Verse based upon quantity -- as we may judge from music, which is quantitative -- shows more sensitiveness to metrical variety than verse based, like ours, upon stress alone. Moreover, our meters

are so few and simple, and these few must do service for so wide a range of expression, that we are utterly unfit to appreciate the fine distinctions wrought by the great abundance of feet and cola in Greek and Latin verse" (269).

The difficult Galliambic rhythm is first related to the dubious Cybele cult and to the Greek setting of the Attis. Then it is defined as a "rapid, orgiastic, dance-march rhythm," its typical movement is scanned, and its variations explained. With this clue we read nine characteristic lines. After a warning against Tennyson's imitation, our younger artists, "who have had to learn several new rhythms in recent dances" are consoled.

"Rhythms that have survived have corresponded to the beat or wail of instruments that kept time to leaping, dancing or marching feet. Feet in their movements are fairly well restricted to regular intervals of time; but the timbrels, especially by the use of syncope, can set the arms and head off on a secondary rhythm which clashes with the tread of the feet, or can transfer the beat with more or less regularity from the tread to the lift of the foot. And such effects even to-day are more frequently sought after in Arabic, Berber and Turkish music than in European forms" (75).

In a word, the exposition is carried through. It serves others than the few who already know. It makes technic suggestive. The frequent use of metric for interpretation is the more cumulative because of the steadying conception of verse as essentially rhythm of movement. Kin thus to dance and also to music, it nevertheless has its own technic because it has its own scope.

Beyond this technical expertness Professor Frank is little concerned here to appraise Catullus, even less to rank him. He does, indeed, stress his directness. At its artistic height that quality is so essential as almost to constitute lyric. Has Catullus that height? *Nox est perpetua una dormienda* is recalled again; it must be; it is one of the perfect lines. But it is also final in the sense of comprising the poet's whole scope. He has no vision. Occasional poetry as he conceived it is strictly limited. Even when the lyric intensification is more than physical, it has short range of insight. How far the lack is due to his time is implied in the abundant historical detail. How far insight is a measure of poetry may be inferred as we pass on to Horace and look back. But those who hold it extraneous will hardly be disturbed.

The style, as will be evident from the quotations, has edge; but it shows no anxiety to cut. It is not restless. Recognizing soon the author's scholarly singleness, his faithful intention to display not himself, but his poets, we trust ourselves to a guide who is witty

because he is winsome, and tranquil because he knows. The usual things about Catullus and Horace may be read elsewhere. Many of them are worth reading. This book, without trying to supersede them, makes a fresh contribution to literary history.

Charles Sears BALDWIN

MR. WESTON'S GOOD WINE

By T. F. Powys. 8vo.

317 pages. The Viking Press. \$3.50.

review by Padraic Colum

IN *Mr. Weston's Good Wine*, a merchant comes to the village of Folly Down to offer to the folk there his vintages, He deals in two sorts, it appears:

"Although we are very glad to see so many take an interest in, and wish to taste, our light and less heady vintages, that are fittest to drink -- and there are many who know this -- in any gentle and green valley about this time of evening, yet there is still a lack of those who order our strongest and oldest wine that brings to the buyer a lasting contentment, and eases his heart for ever from all care and torment."

The merchant travels through the country in a Ford car, and he has an assistant, a young man who is named Michael. He writes the name of his good wine on the sky in letters of flame; the clocks stop when he arrives in the village. He is an author -- in fact, he is The Author -- and his assistant is an Angel. All whom he has dealings with have some heaven or hell consummated in themselves. *Mr. Weston's Good Wine* is a story that seems to have been written to illustrate with the crudity of a woodcut upon a ballad-sheet the saying, "Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands or feet," and the other saying about His coming having the casualness of a thief in the night.

We have in this story the English village that is always in Mr T. F. Powys' books, and we have the same assortment of characters -- wanton and longing girls, loutish fellows, eccentric recluses, depraved women, harmless devotees, and earth-bound rustics. They

never develop as a novelist's creations develop -- all that happens to them is that, according to their faculties, they become aware of the mystery of human destiny. There is Tamar Grobe. For her there is no development; there is consummation. There is her maid, Jenny Bunce, whose "young body is as plump as 4 robin's, and her eyes look so naughtily into yours when you meet her that it is near impossible to refuse their asking." For Jenny, too, there is consummation -- much more ordinary than the consummation to Tamar's desire -- Tamar, of whom Mr Weston is told, "The grassy downs know the tread of her little feet and the light pressure, and there is no tree nor bush that would not give all its flowers and leaves -- yea, its very sap -- to be a man for her sake, because her wishes are so burning." Then there is Mrs Vosper who plots the degradation of the village maidens; there are the brothers Mumby who are more carnal than the beasts; there is Mr Bird who longs to possess Jenny Bunce and who in the meanwhile preaches Christianity to the geese and to Mr Mumby's bull; there is Mr Grobe the rector, Tamar's father, who longs to find again his dead Alice -- all these enter into their heaven or their hell as they have dealings with the wine-merchant.

In reading *Mr. Weston's Good Wine*, one wonders what gift Mr T. F. Powys has that makes the reading of his books a real experience. As stories they are incoherent; his people never develop, and obviously they are distorted. And yet, in spite of all that, something of a revelation comes out of all his books. There are writers who can construct a narrative, who can give a development to their characters, and who yet cannot give their characters significance. Mr T. F. Powys can give significance to his distorted characters: that is the first of his gifts. He can also evoke pictures of the English village and the English countryside -- pictures that remind one of those left by the great eighteenth-century painters who made pigs at a trough, or men drinking on benches in an inn, scenes to be remembered always. And he puts desire into his books; he is able to make us feel something that is immense and urgent.

His books have defects that could have been got rid of. Mr. Weston's Good Wine, like a few of his other books, is about a third too long. It is a fantasy, after all, and a story that is much longer than *Candide* is too long for a fantasy. And the desire that is back of his books, that gives his books their urge, often becomes sick and morbid. Many of T. F. Powys' characters are uncongenial, not because they know the violence of sexual desire, but because they know nothing else. Sex to them is an obsession, and in actual life we try to get away from people with obsessions.

T. F. Powys' books are never constructed as narratives. His plots are merely a trellis over which his imaginings trail as vines trail. For all his outer unlikeness to them he has more affinities with the great confession-writers than he has with the story-tellers,

I feel that when I write down this sentence from Amiel's Journal J will be stating the theme of *Mr. Weston's Good Wine* and of the other books:

"An indifferent nature? A Satanic principle of things? A good and just God? Three points of view. The second is improbable and horrible. The first appeals to our stoicism...But the third point of view alone can give joy. Only is it tenable? . . . To nature both our continued existence and our morality are equally indifferent. . . ."

Like this great confession-writer, T. F. Powys is an explorer of the inner life, and an explorer especially at the point where the inner life seems to sink into the life of nature. Like him, he is occupied with the problem of human destiny. Unlike the story-teller, the novelist, he has no particular interest in human relationships: his people only focus a meditation upon "an indifferent nature? A Satanic principle in things? A good and just God?" But with him desire dominates intellect, and all he sees in nature is filled with vitality:

"The hedges were white with sloe-blossom, and the willow bushes were in flower; a few butterflies were abroad and the bumble-bees. The blackthorn blossoms were shed; the new green of the hedges came, and the sweet scent of may blossom. The may faded, but in the meadows the deeper colour of the buttercups -- those June brides -- took the place of the maiden cowslips until the hay-mowers came, and then the white and red roses bloomed in the hedges. Midsummer, that time of rich sunshine, was soon gone ; the meadows were yellow again with hawkweed, while in the rougher fields the ragwort grew in clumps, upon which the peacock butterflies fed until near drunken with honey."

BRIEFER MENTION

The Redemption of Tycho Brahe, by Max Brod, translated from the German by Felix Warren Crosse, with introduction by Stefan Zweig (12mo, 289 pages; Knopf : \$2.50) has a spaciousness and eloquence which only a first-rate imagination can bring to the art of the historical novel, The spiritual conflict between Tycho Brahe, Danish astronomer, and Kepler is traced with a dramatic intensity which suggests Ibsen, and there is something of the elemental tragedy of Lear in the life of Tycho himself,

Max Brod has taken stubborn material and -- by sheer creative fervour -- made it plastic and richly subservient to his purpose.

Armance, by Stendhal (Henri Beyle) translated from the French by C. K. Scott Moncrieff (12mo, 282 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2.50) is neither a first-class novel nor an interesting one in spite of the publishers who jacket the book with a promise of sexual interest. It is an early work of a genius; it has a few profound observations and readers of *Red and Black* and *The Charterhouse of Parma* will find in its characters early sketches of the towering figures of those novels. The suggestion that Stendhal was writing a novel about an impotent man and concealing the fact is not out of keeping with his private character, but is neither consistent with his methods as a novelist nor borne out by the text.

Bambi, by Felix Salten, translated from the German by Whittaker Chambers, with a foreword by John Galsworthy (10mo, 293 pages; Simon & Schuster: \$2.50) is composed with such simplicity that it might well serve as a text to trace the distinction between fine writing and fine feeling. There is no artifice here, unless one gives that name to an occasional twinkle of gentle irony. The story is unfolded so quietly that one can quite hear the stillness of the forest in which it is set. Being a poet, the author is not so much concerned with what may be reported by observation as he is intent upon what may be conveyed by imagination. He has written a story about animals which is neither condescending nor conventional.

Swan Song, by John Galsworthy (12mo, 360 pages; Scribner's: \$2.50). One can very well admire here, the dexterity, judgement, and continence of a practised novelist getting up loose ends of prior tales into a story of some worth and being. *Swan Song* is not an advance upon *The White Monkey* or *The Silver Spoon*, its companions in the wake of the *Saga*, nor is it any more than they, a needed convoy for that great ship of fiction. Yet it is well-contained, and what can be done it does with an eminent technique and sympathies that though thin at several points are rich at others. The tale seems principally concerned with the recrudescence of Fleur Forsyte's passion for her cousin Jon Forsyte, but perhaps the deeper centre of sympathy in the picture lies in her father, Soames, the man of property, that "dry grey spirit." The depiction here is no better than that in the *Saga*, but it is certainly good.

Contemporaries of Marco Polo, edited by Manuel Komroff (8vo, 358 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$3.50). Curious are the customs and strange are the practices which came to the notice of the four worthy travellers whose records have been made beguilingly accessible in this volume. That William of Rubruck and John of Pian de Carpin and Friar Odoric and Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela are all equally reliable reporters one is quite ready to believe for the sake of the relish which their recitals impart, although Friar Odoric is the only one sufficiently mindful of the scepticism

of posterity to put his probity on oath, in these solemn words: "I -- before almighty God -- do here make record of nothing but of that only of which I am as sure as a man may be sure." In any event, one does not doubt that the Tartars, as Friar William affirms, "are very scrupulous, and take diligent heed not to drink pure water by itself." To these colourful narratives, Mr Komroff contributes an introduction and a bibliography.

Kit Carson, The Happy Warrior of the Old West, by Stanley Vestal (8vo, 297 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$3.50) will not fail to quicken the pulse of even the least pioneer of readers. Mr Vestal seems to have had a happy endowment for his task; he has served up his hero with an effective blend of appreciation and restraint, so that the picturesque trapper and fighter is delineated neither as a circus-poster absurdity nor as a stock pattern for five-reel westerns. The measure of the man, as his biographer points out, is discernible in the brief notes on his own life which he dictated but could not read. "Constantly in his memoirs," remarks Mr Vestal, "he uses the expression 'concluded to charge them, done so' all in one sentence. To Kit decision and action were but two steps in one process." One suspects that Wall Street chooses its executives from Kit Carson stock.

Havelock Ellis, Philosopher of Love, by Houston Peterson (8vo, 432 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$4.50). This biography is not perhaps in the tradition of incisiveness, and even suffers somewhat from over-quotation, especially from the elsewhere available works of Dr Ellis. Still these are not impassable hindrances to those who are interested in the subject, and in reading through these four hundred pages one comes to a very full impression of the immense and various activities of scholarship, the poise and courage, the humanity, the tranquil and elastic mind that have made Dr Ellis so great a modern.

=====

NOVEMBER

A GLANCE AT THE SOUL OF JAPAN

BY PAUL CLAUDEL

Note: An address before the students of the University of Nikko

Translated From the French by Lillian Chamberlain

WHEN I was asked by my friend, Gorai, collaborator with Professor Michel Revon in the compilation of that admirable *Anthologie de la Littérature Japonaise* (which never leaves my work-table) to discuss the subject of French tradition, I said that I was not quite equal to the task. It is almost as difficult to

speaking of one's country as of one's self. Between the impression which we have of ourselves and that which we make upon sincere and unbiassed persons who have come expressly to study us, there is a difference which the books of travellers permit us to savour in all its piquancy. And while it is easy to accuse them of naiveté or malice, is it quite certain that they are always in the wrong, and that we only are irrefutable witnesses of ourselves? For the most part, to tell the truth, people act without being really conscious of what they are doing, they are not actuated by reasonable and definite motives which they could instantly explain, but by habit, by instinctive, extemporized response to the impulses of circumstance, duty, necessity -- by an empirical application of instruction accepted without question and acted upon without reflection. We inhabit a certain corner of nature and society as we inhabit our bodies -- in the same naive, comfortable, ignorant, animal way -- and when we are invited by a direct question or false inference to explain this or that action, are subject to confusion or offence much as if we had been asked to justify our eyes or nose. It has to be so because it is so, and we cannot visualize the pictorial, pristine effect that we have on strangers. They alone can distill, , guish what is characteristic, special, and at times unique in an act or mode of behaviour, a mental attitude which seems to us natural and inevitable. A native, however, again has the advantage when he attempts to understand reasons for the often bizarre and disconcerting effect which he makes upon visitors. As throwing light on it he has in his possession a rich store of archives, of incidents, and of data, which afford him in relation to himself, somewhat the outside disinterested position of critic, and at the same time, a sort of intuitiveness and sympathy which enable him retroactively to prolong for his consideration the experiences of his forefathers and ancestors, very much as if their life were his own. It is this experience, short, long, conscious or unconscious -- that we call national tradition. You have more direct access to it than is afforded in the briefs of our country or in a few arbitrarily selected illustrations. Entrance to this most intimate tribunal of our national mind, to this sort of continual parliament where all litigation is carried on, where all cases are heard and all judgements are rendered, this supreme record which enters into all our legal proceedings, all our intellectual customs, is our language. The French language is at once the most perfect product and most incontrovertible certificate of our national tradition. It has been the chief means of building up a people comprising twenty distinct races, from the residue of I know not how many invasions and migrations following one upon the other. Arrived at this land's end, brought up short against the European jetty, these peoples found themselves compelled to establish between their distinctive strata and cross-sections, a solidarity, an accord which the land also imposed upon them. Though ethnologically diverse, France is one and indivisible geographically, and counsels to disruption are less puissant by far than are the necessities for concentration. There could be among the French

none but spiritual controversies, and to the intellect alone could the task of reconciliation be confided. Every citizen of this chance variform assemblage which had emerged from the ruins of the Roman Empire and the moraines of Barbary thus found himself inclined to become an orator, a diplomat, a jurist. He was led to seek in general and enduring forces underlying special fortuities, an explanation of the existence of the nation. Add that geographically France is not the slave of fixed conditions, is not committed indefinitely to a repetition of the same course of action, but is 50 situated that nothing of general import can take place in the occident without involving her. And she must continually arrange her affairs in such a way as to balance conditions, modifying them at times by inducing, at times by arresting action, always counterbalancing some element in the general situation. To solve the new problems with which he was constantly being confronted the Frenchman had need not so much of empiricism as of a general principle for forming judgements. Our longest war, the Hundred Years' War, was but a juridic debate punctuated with appeals to arms. That France should have been placed by providence at the intersection of all continental interests precludes the possibility of rigidly prescribing her destiny or of arbitrarily setting limits for her. Law must intervene. The treaties of Westphalia and Utrecht and the acts of Vienna and Versailles were not mere redistributions of territory, they were above all, formulated principles of which the new map divisions were but a consequence. And what is true of our foreign policies is equally true of our domestic ones. Each Frenchman, . . . heir of twenty miscellaneous races, has always constituted -- to himself -- a little sovereignty carrying on a continual diplomatic and judicial interchange of thought and feeling with neighbouring sovereignties, under the authority of a sort of scattered but all-powerful tribunal called Opinion. From this fact arises not only the importance we attach to literature and to language, but also that thing so characteristically essential to both -- whether it be prose or poetry, whether concerned with psychology or description -- the passionate desire for accuracy. We are always explaining, and explaining ourselves. The desire with us to perfect the language and make it efficient has been not merely the ambition of a few highly cultured persons, but a matter of great practical importance; we could not too highly esteem and cherish the chief instrument of our national unity which, in the course of a continually open debate, has permitted us to take cognizance of our permanent mission and successive obligations. Thus was established little by little, this habitual attitude of the Frenchman to life, having for its main characteristic, inclination for discussion. He is by nature a jurist, in every instance his instinct is to seek causes and, if I may be permitted to play on words, also to plead them (since the same term with us is used to designate the explanation of a thing's existence and the legal process by which is established one's right to it). In France literature has not been the expression of a few exceptional minds; it has been rather the neces.

sity of an entire race, the uninterrupted means of communication between its different geographical divisions, conducive to master every new problem brought forward. Every Frenchman has always had the sense of speaking before a tribunal of experts, any one of whom was qualified to ask him to explain every word.

It is one of these Frenchmen whose mental attitude I have been trying to give an idea of, who would bring his still naive testimony, before reflection and habit have had time to distort and blunt it. . . - Pilgrim of many journeys, it was but yesterday that he disembarked on this shore which for so many years had enriched his mental horizon. And having once passed the utilitarian zone in which the everyday needs of humanity are supplied in Japan as elsewhere by the same apparatus of machinery and buildings, he immediately finds himself face to face with a country which is not, like so many countries in Europe or America, a simple agricultural or industrial enterprise, the inn of a day or a night, patronized without special intention or thought -- but an hereditary domain the significance of which is less the practical convenience of its immediate occupants than the composing of a solemn and instructive spectacle. Everything Japanese from the outline of a mountain to that of a hairpin or a saké bowl is in conformity with a single style. In order to discover Japanese tradition it is not necessary, as in the case of the French, to penetrate to that intimate tribunal in which ideas arise and mental attitudes make trial of their strength; there is nothing to do but open eyes and ears to this irresistible concert about us to which each generation must in turn tune its instruments and voice.

Let us listen, but in order to hear we must first create silence. Music begins only where noise ceases. Let this confused tumult of velleity and words subside in us. If I were one of your mystic pilgrims, I should induce this by having an ancient ritual prayer recited over me and should surrender myself to the benediction of the little brush which confers purity and contemplativeness. Here I am, one of the followers in the train of a certain personage in your literature, the poetess Murasaki, or the bonze Kennko, who persuades me to tread silently in the path of mysteries. It seems to me I hear the rustle of noble silk or the click of the chaplet against the alms-bowl. I follow an endless alley of enormous cedars with coloured trunks which lose themselves in black velvet; a fierce ray of sunlight sears with lightning stroke an indecipherable inscription on a stone pillar. The windings of the strange road serve to evade demons and to separate me for ever from a profane world. Over a coral arch I cross a jade pool (is it this pool which by a fugitive gleam of light between the motionless pads of the lotus, will discover to me my invisible companions?). Shadowed by the centuries I pour upon my hands from a seibilla, water so piercing, so cold, that I am born again. Behind the closed door I listen for the bell tolling slowly as though meditating; a waxlight burns, and

below in the chaos of leaves I hear the voice of the cuckoo answering the liturgy of the cascade.

And it is here I perceive the distinctively Japanese attitude to life to be that which for lack of better equivalent -- French does not offer great resources for expressing this sentiment -- I shall call reverence, respect, free acceptance of an exaltation too great for the intellect, the sinking of personality in circumambient mystery, the sense of an enveloping presence which makes incumbent upon one a measured decorum. It is not for nothing that Japan has been called the land of Kami, and this traditional characterization . . . seems to me the most perfect that has been achieved. Japan is like a dense bank of clouds on the bosom of a boundless ocean. Its jagged shores, its inner harbours, its mysterious openings are to the sailor a continual surprise. Its mountainous framework constitutes not only one of the most complex formations in the world, but one disturbed by mysterious convulsions, the precarious nature of which is attested by the tremors which still agitate the unstable soil. It is like a stage-setting which the mechanics have just left, the back-drop and wings still shaking a little. The plains of Japan are among the most populous parts of the world, but certain mountainous districts, vast tracts of veritable jungle recalling the tropics, are still as uninhabited as at the day of Creation. On every side, nothing but valleys, folded and refolded; forests blacker than night, inextricable tangles of reeds, ferns, and bamboos. Over it all, and at some seasons almost continuously, descends a curtain of rain; here wander those strange vapours of which ancient and modern Japanese painters have with such sovereign result availed themselves, vapours which by turns hide and disclose as though on purpose corners of the landscape, as if someone wished to call them to our attention and expose for a moment their occult significance. And above the whole country, dominating plain and mountain, sea and island, the most majestic altar as it were, that Nature ever raised to her Creator -- a landmark thousands of years old, worthy to commemorate the spot where the Sun after speeding far over watery wastes, prepares to engage in the human phase of its activity -- rises the heroic form of Fuji.'

Thus to whichever side one directs his glance, he finds himself surrounded with veils which open only to close again, with silent awe-inspiring retreats to which there are long winding paths like those of an initiation ceremony, with funereal shades, with strange objects -- an old tree-trunk, a stone worn by water, like indecipherable sacred documents -- with perspectives which discover themselves to him only through rock porticoes or colonnades of trees, All nature is a temple prepared for worship. In Japan there are none of those great rivers, none of those vast plains with gradually ascending sky-lines, which entice the dreamer and invite the spirit to endless voyaging. At each step the imagination is arrested as it were by the fold of a screen and an arranged perspective, the

hidden meaning of which bespeaks the homage of his attention. The artist or hermit need only mark it by a Shinto gate-way or a lantern, or a splendid temple, or by erecting a simple stone. But it is never the edifice, however gilded, which seems to me to be as in Europe, its soul. It is a casket, a censer placed obscurely to induce a consciousness of the great solemnity of nature, and so to speak objectify it. Like these few characters or brush-strokes, with a vermilion seal added, which the poet or artist disposes on a sheet of white paper.

While the European of to-day sees in his environment a realm merely calculated to contribute to his comfort or profit, without doubt to the traditional Japanese, Creation is first of all the work of God, still permeated with divine influences; and since in Japan one does not enter the home of the humblest peasant without removing one's shoes, with what reverence ought not mortals to comport themselves in approaching the parvis before the abode of Higher Powers, privileged by them to use it in common with them? Repeating what I said a moment ago, just as temples here seem not to have been built with a deliberate purpose but rather in answer to the latent prayer of the landscape, thickening by art the dense forest shade, as here in sacred Nikko; guiding the voices of these ever-flowing waters; rendering permanent on the black of the foliage the gold and scarlet of a ray of sun; imprisoning the thunder under a bronze bell; repeating and making more solemn by the upward flight of porticoes and stairways, an ascending earth; reiterating by their avenues of giant witnesses the reticent appeal of the sanctuary; so in the same way, what else do their crowds of pilgrims venerate -- those pilgrims who with an affecting zeal, do not cease to throng these temples ? -- what do they worship behind the ever lowered curtains? A mirror as it were reflecting heaven, a drop of the primordial Waters, the name of saint or ancestor carved on a tablet, something confounded with night -- above all, night itself, that mystery upon which the naive heart piously meditates.

I have been struck forcibly by the fact that as expressions of Buddhism during the primitive period in Japan, at Nara for example, one sees numbers of very beautiful statues. Later, and in proportion as Japan had time to impose her own character on the imported religion, these set representations became more and more rare. They withdrew into denser and denser shade until finally, in modern times, they have neither form nor voice.

It is something quite invisible in the sacred cave that they are trying to reach -- this humble woman who claps her hands two or three times, this group of mystics who cast a handful of pennies into the box, this little girl who climbs the temple steps uncertainly and wakens the bronze frog at the end of the thrice-twisted cotton rope.

The supernatural in Japan is then nothing but nature, is literally supernature, that region of superior reality in which brute fact is metamorphosed into meaning. It does not contradict law but rather emphasizes the mysteriousness of it. The whole purport of religion is to induce humility and silence in the presence of that which is everlasting. The patriotism of the Japanese accordingly seems to me above all, unbroken communion with his country -- that is to say, poignant contemplation of the face of nature. Among the crowds of voluntary pilgrims at all the noted scenic spots, nothing could be more striking than the long file of school-children whom their masters are conducting to a special point that they in turn may receive the impression by which so many generations have been influenced. This attitude of reverence and ceremony has here become a habit of the soul, not only upon visiting spots signalized as privileged seats of divine influence but in the presence of all created beings who are, like us, the work of one father and the revelation of his will. The relationship expresses itself in gesture and ceremonial. I recall how, upon an early visit to Kyoto, as I walked in one of the beautiful gardens which are the charm of that incomparable city, a great pine that I saw stirred me, penetrating my consciousness; it was almost ready to fall, but was supported by a sort of enormous crutch that someone had piously fitted to it. This tree seemed to me not merely what it would be to an American or European -- a mine of boards, a mute thing in the landscape -- but a live being, a sort of vegetable grandfather to whom someone had lent filial assistance. Nothing is commoner than to see a tree of unusual proportions or a distinctively shaped rock encircled with a strand of sacred rice straw and thus placed among things Kami, testifying to the attention visitors have bestowed on it and to their gratitude for its existence. When a household pet has died, it is carried to the temple where the nembutsu is recited over it by the bonze; no life however humble is, in disappearing, too valueless for religious commitment. A merchant, a seller of rat-poison, will commemorate by a service, rodents his product has destroyed; and a stationer, old brushes which are past usefulness. Finally and prettiest of all -- I read the other day in a newspaper that the wood-engravers' association of Tokyo had engaged in a ceremony to honour the cherry-trees whose substance they had used in their art.

It is this reverent, worshipful feeling -- a kindly, tender fellowship with the world of creatures -- in which the secret of Japan's art consists. It is striking that in appreciating the products of it, our taste has long been at variance with that of Japan. We prefer the engravings and paintings of the Ukiyoe school, looked upon in Japan as of a rather decadent period, but one for which I may be pardoned for having, personally, kept my first enthusiasm: it admits of a strong, stately, dramatic, brilliant, witty, picturesque, infinitely varied and animated rendering of familiar sights, man in his customary setting and employments being given chief place

in it. Whereas the trend of Japanese taste is toward antiquity -- pictures from which man is absent for the most part or is present only in monastic equivalent, as immobile nearly as the trees' and stones. A carp, a monkey hanging from a branch, a few flowers, a landscape with level superimposed above level, which a master brush has painted with strokes as definite as handwriting -- such are the things presented for the most part on these priceless kakemonos recovered from the depths of the past by their happy possessors and unrolled before us with infinite care. And sometimes just at first, we barbarians, who feel that we must be surprised and entertained, have a sense of disappointment. We lack the humility which would permit the soul to be affectionately united to this tender shoot beginning to quicken, to this potent stroke of the tail of the fish rising from the dusky slime into regions of aquatic light. It is but gradually we perceive that life itself is before us in this delightful suppleness, this exactitude, this exquisite suspension of movement which, for instance, directs and informs this monkey from the points of his claws to the tip of his tail (it is not a monkey in motion, but motion become monkey), this savant, naive choice of treatment, this patient contemplation joined to lightning rapidity of hand, this rigidly austere suppressing of unnecessary alien elements; it is no longer art but life itself, in action, which is disclosed to you, more divine by reason of its anonymity. Observe this trivial fraction of life which, thanks to the devout unselfative artist, has become alive for all time. And even as the grand seigneurs of former days preferred to gold and crystal vases a simple earthen bowl to which the potter had imparted the resilience of flesh and the brightness of dew, so in striving to express the eternal, these great artists, often priests, have painted not only gods and symbols but things the most fragile and ephemeral, the most pristine stirring of the ineffable source, a bird, a butterfly, less: an opening flower, a falling leaf. By the magic point of a brush this has been so ordained. The very thing is here before us, alive and immortal, its transitoriness henceforth indestructible.

So evident is this to me that I shall not labour the manner in which a reverence so deep in the heart of the Japanese, has come to determine the modalities of their ordinary life. The nature of the tie between the nation and their sovereign is well known; it is not exaggeration, moreover, to say that in ancient Japanese society, all human relationships of family, clan, and corporation, were obedient to the dictates of an all but sacred ritual. In no country has the Confucian principle of seemly behaviour been more generally or more nobly exemplified. If indeed something of mystery and divinity be attributed to inanimate objects, how much more appropriately would it pertain to man. Japanese grammar yields itself to variations of time and circumstance, and to degrees of respect and formality required by the dignity of the speaker and of the persons addressed, and of the occasion in question. It is marked by an hereditary politeness which I truly hope the Japanese

will never lose despite the bad examples set them.' It is always a surprise to us occidentals to see one coachman salute another pleasantly in passing as though to apologize, instead of reviling him as would be the case in London or Paris. Can you imagine a chauffeur who, like the chauffeur of one of my Tokyo colleagues, goes weekly to burn incense at the tomb of the forty-seven Ronins? It is moreover the personal consciousness in each man, of something sacred and inviolable which explains the extreme nature of Japan's ancient code of honour. When the inmost sanctuary of his personality had suffered insult, a man had to disappear or cause his insulter to disappear. Finally, I detect this mystic instinct, this sanctity even in the sensibility which informs profound feelings and emotions, in the very care even, with which objects that you hold dear are concealed -- even in the complicated art of boxes and multiple envelopes in which presents, purchases, and small domestic treasures are cunningly clothed and dissembled. Regarding this little thesis as no more than a surface enquiry into psychology, as but a tentative summing-up, I shall close with what illustrates as it seems to me the way in which Japanese religious feeling has something in common with that of humanity as a whole. I am reading with much admiration and benefit, the reminiscences of a man who has devoted his life to serving the poor, who lives among beggars and prostitutes in one of the most wretched quarters of Kobe, and I borrow from him to make myself clear to you. He writes, after having been converted to Christianity, that what made the strongest impression on him in the teachings of the gospel was the commandment not merely to love one's neighbour but also to honour him. Not only ought we to love creatures the most degraded spiritually and materially, but also to value and honour them as being, like us, the creatures, the living temples of Divinity. They, even more than we, bear the special mark of his hand (like this pine twisted into the supplicating attitude of a paralytic'). Nothing is more Christian than this sublime sentiment, and I rejoice to believe, more characteristically and profoundly Japanese.

1 The profound, oft repeated reverences, set off by words and glances, with which Loti diverts himself in *Madame Chrysanthemum*, testify to the satisfaction we experience in penetrating further and further the identity of those we meet. They give time for preparation, for the adjusting of our hearts, *siaosin* in the Chinese proverb.

There remains for me but to glance back with you over the landscape we have been regarding, and to conclude with a consideration of certain prospects which the future holds out to us.

It seems to me that at the foundation of the traditional Japanese soul is respect -- a subordinating of personality to the object considered, deferent recognition of the life and of the things which surround one. Religion in Japan has not thus far been the worship of a transcendent Being, but is specifically associated with nature

and with that society in which it exists; and although it resembles the religions of India and China in that it is without belief in a precise revelation from the other world, it differs profoundly from both. The Indian is essentially a contemplative, meditating continually on the same thing -- a verdure eternally non-existent, ever hiding and ever hidden. The Chinese, distributed over the greatest fertile tract of land on the face of the earth has been preoccupied for the most part with regulating the individual's relations to his fellow-man, with the formulating of moral and practical laws enabling brothers to divide an inheritance of land and water without violence or recourse to law. The Japanese belongs to an isolated unit that has shown throughout centuries its ability to forgo contact with the rest of the world. His country is a kind of sanctuary built and adorned, in which he watches a brilliant, significant ceremonial, progress throughout successive rites, from one year's end to the next, from January snows till the shoots make their way up out of the earth under the warm rain of the nymbai, from April's exhalations of the rose to autumn's conflagration. Life for him is participation in this august calendar as the child of an ancient family takes part in the traditional anniversaries of the household. He allies himself with nature rather than subjugates it, adjusts his life to her ceremonial, observes her, follows her, renders her speech and her detail more perfect; their lives intermingle. In no country is there more acute understanding between man and nature, or a more evident reciprocal imprint. For two centuries they have but contemplated each other. May one not hope that this communion shall endure and that its teaching to the rest of humanity shall not fail, that alien buildings, commonplace and unrelated to the ground on which they stand, shall not -- like the howls of slaves and of the damned -- drown with discord the music of these enchanted isles? As often as I return to France I note with chagrin the growth of a vile invention, a scourge worse than phylloxera, which is destroying the beauty of our landscape: | refer to the machine-made tile, a thing of artificial and rigid aspect like the soul of a serf, whose strident red is replacing the beautiful tapestry of faded purple like Bokhara wool, the honourable old roofing of Champagne and Provence. Introduced into the most harmonious landscape, a single touch of this insolent, inexpugnable carmine is enough to ruin every other effect like an imbecile's laugh shattering orchestral harmony. So, in Japan also, unless means are found to check these pernicious materials, I fear that re-enforced concrete and zinc may work like havoc. According to an old Chinese superstition, the fong shui, natural harmony cannot be impaired with impunity, and should nature be travestied or its form and meaning effaced, human beings in that dishonoured region will be exposed to every malign influence. I hope there may never be such a day for Japan, and that peaceful union of man and earth will endure through the ages, as in the words of your national hymn, "like the moss on the rock."

1 In Japan a man need not pray; the very soil is divine. Hitomara.

N. E. LANDSCAPE BY MARSHALL SCHACHT

Now to this rusty field
crows gather, and the autumn yield

is lost in smoke.

What once was oak

is nothing but the memory of oak,

a song upon a reed,

a fallen star, the windy seed

of the milkweed flower

that winds devour

in fields that speak the language Lazarus spoke.

THREE POEMS BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

ON GAY WALLPAPER

The green-blue ground
is ruled with silver lines
to say the sun is shining

And on this moral sea
of grass or dreams lie flowers
or baskets of desires

Heaven knows what they are
between cerulean shapes
laid regularly round

Mat roses and tridentate
leaves of gold
threes, threes and threes

Three roses and three stems
the basket floating
standing in the horns of blue

Repeated to the ceiling
to the windows
where the day blows in

The scalloped curtains to
the sound of rain

THE LILY

The branching head of
tiger-lilies through the window
in the air

And in the air a humming-bird
is still on whirring wings
above the flowers

By spotted petals curling back
and tongues that hang
the air is seen

It's raining
water's caught
among the curled back petals

Caught and held
and there's a fly
are blossoming

THE SOURCE

I

The slope of the heavy woods
pales and disappears
in a wall of mist that hides

the edge above whose peak
last night the moon --

But it is morning and a new light
marks other things
a pasture which begins

where silhouettes of scrub
and balsams stand uncertainly

On whose green three maples
are distinctly pressed
beside a red barn

with new shingles in the old
all cancelled by

A triple elm's inverted
lichen mottled
triple thighs from which

whisps of twigs
droop with sharp leaves

Which shake in the crotch
brushing the stained bark
fitfully

Beyond which lies
the profound detail of the woods
restless, distressed

soft underfoot
the low ferns

Mounting a rusty root
the pungent mould
globular fungi

water in an old
hoof print

Cow dung and in
the uneven aisles of
the trees

rock strewn a stone
half green

A spring in whose depth
white sand bubbles
overflows

3

clear under late raspberries
and delicate stemmed touch-me-nots

Where alders follow it marking
the low ground
the water is cast upon

a stair of uneven stones
with a rustling sound

An edge of bubbles stirs
swiftness is moulded

speed grows

the profuse body advances
over the stones unchanged

DR WILLIAMS' POSITION BY EZRA POUND

THERE is an anecdote told me by his mother, who wished me to understand his character, as follows: The young William Carlos, aged let us say about seven, arose in the morning, dressed and put on his shoes. Both shoes buttoned on the left side. He regarded this untoward phenomenon for a few moments and then carefully removed the shoes, placed shoe 1 that had been on his left foot, on his right foot, and shoe 2, that had been on the right foot, on his left foot; both sets of buttons again appeared on the left side of the shoes.

This stumped him. With the shoes so buttoned he went to school, but . . . and here is the significant part of the story, he spent the day in careful consideration of the matter.

It happens that this type of sensibility, persisting through forty years, is of extreme, and almost unique, value in a land teeming, swarming, pullulating with clever people all capable of competent and almost instantaneous extroversion ; during the last twenty of these years it has distinguished Dr Williams from floral and unconscious mind of the populace and from the snappy go-getters who'der seen wot wuz rong in er moment.

It has prevented our author from grabbing ready made conclusions, and from taking too much for granted.

There are perhaps, or perhaps have been milieux where the reflective and examining habits would not have conferred, unsupported, a distinction. But chez nous, for as long as I can remember if an article appeared in Munsey's or McClure's, expressing a noble passion (civic or other) one cd. bank (supposing one were exercising editorial or quasi-editorial functions) on seeing the same article served up again in some fifty lyric expressions within, let us say, three or four months.

Our national mind hath about it something "marvelous porous" ; an idea or notion dropped into N. Y. harbour emerges in Sante Fe or Galveston, watered, diluted, but still the same idea or notion,

pale but not wholly denatured; and the time of transit is very considerably lower, than any "record" hitherto known. We have the defects of our qualities, and that very alertness which makes the single American diverting or enlivening in an European assembly often undermines his literary capacity.

For fifteen or eighteen years I have cited Williams as sole known American-dwelling author who could be counted on to oppose some sort of barrier to such penetration; the sole catalectic in whose presence some sort of modification would take place.

Williams has written: "All I do is to try to understand something in its natural colours and shapes." There could be no better effort underlying any literary process, or used as preparative for literary process; but it appears, it would seem, almost incomprehensible to men dwelling west of the Atlantic: I don't mean that it appears so in theory, America will swallow anything in theory, all abstract statements are perfectly welcome, given a sufficiently plausible turn. But the concrete example of this literary process, whether by Williams or by that still more unreceived and uncomprehended native hickory Mr Joseph Gould, seems an unrelated and inexplicable incident to our populace and to our "monde -- or whatever it is -- littéraire." We have, of course, distinctly American authors, Mr Frost for example, but there is an infinite gulf between Mr Frost on New England customs, and Mr Gould on race prejudice; Mr Frost having simply taken cognate, without any apparent self-questioning a definite type and set of ideas and sensibilities, known and established in his ancestral demesne. That is to say he is "typical New England." Gould is no less New England, but parts of his writing could have proceeded equally well from a Russian, a German, or an exceptional Frenchman -- the difference between regionalism, or regionalist art and art that has its roots in a given locality.

Carlos Williams has been determined to stand or sit as an American. Freud would probably say "because his father was English" (in fact half English, half Danish). His mother, as ethnologists have before noted, was a mixture of French and Spanish; of late years (the last four or five) Dr Williams has laid claim to a somewhat remote Hebrew connexion, possibly a rabbi in Saragossa, at the time of the siege. He claims American birth, but I strongly suspect that he emerged on ship-board just off Bedloe's Island and that his dark and serious eyes gazed up in their first sober contemplation at the Statue and its brazen and monstrous nightshirt.

At any rate he has not in his ancestral endocrines the arid curse of our nation. None of his immediate forbears burnt witches in Salem, or attended assemblies for producing prohibitions. His father was in the rum trade; the rich ichors of the Indies, Hollands, Jamaicas, Goldwasser, Curagoas provided the infant William with material sustenance. Spanish was not a strange tongue, and the

trade profited by discrimination, by dissociations performed with the palate. All of which belongs to an American yesterday, and is as gone as les caves de Mouquin.

From this secure angle William Carlos was able to look out on his circumjacent and see it as something interesting but exterior; as he could not by any possibility resemble any member of the Concord School he was able to observe national phenomena without necessity for constant vigilance over himself, there was no instinctive fear that if he forgot himself he might be like some really unpleasant Ralph Waldo; neither is he, apparently, filled with any vivid desire to murder the indescribable dastards who betray the work of the national founders, who spread the fish-hooks of bureaucracy in our once, perhaps, pleasant bypaths.

One might accuse him of being, blessedly, the observant foreigner, perceiving American vegetation and landscape quite directly, as something put there for him to look at; and this contemplative habit extends, also blessedly, to the fauna.

When Mr Wanamaker's picture gallery burned in the dead of winter I was able to observe the destruction of faked Van Dykes etc, comme spectacle, the muffler'd lads of the village tearing down gold frames in the light of the conflagration, the onyx-topped tables against the blackness were still more "tableau," and one could think detachedly of the French Revolution. Mr Wanamaker was nothing to me, he paid his employees badly, and I knew the actual spectacle was all I should ever get out of him. I cannot, on the other hand, observe the national "mansion" befouled by Volsteads and Bryans, without anger; I cannot see liberties that have lasted for a century thrown away for nothing, frontiers tied up by imbecile formulae, a bureaucracy and system exceeding "anything known in Russia under the Czars" without indignation. And this comparison to Russia is not mine, but comes from a Czarist official who had been stationed in Washington.

And by just this susceptibility on my part Williams, as author, has the no small advantage. If he wants to "do" anything about what he sees, this desire for action does not rise until he has meditated in full and at leisure. Where I see scoundrels and vandals, he sees a spectacle or an ineluctable process of nature. Where I want to kill at once, he ruminates, and if this rumination leads to anger it is an almost inarticulate anger, that may but lend colour to style, but which stays almost wholly in the realm of his art. I mean it is a qualificative, contemplative, does not drive him to some ultra-artistic or non-artistic activity.

Even recently where one of his characters clearly expresses a dissatisfaction with the American milieu, it is an odium against a condition of mind, not against overt acts or institutions.

The lack of celerity in his process, the unfamiliarity with facile or with established solutions wd. account for the irritation his earlier prose, as I remember it, caused to sophisticated Britons. "How any man could go on talking about such things!" and so on. But the results of this sobriety of unhurried contemplation, when apparent in such a book as *In the American Grain*, equally account for the immediate appreciation of Williams by the small number of french critics whose culture is sufficiently wide to permit them to read any modern tongue save their own.

Here, at last, was an America treated with a seriousness and by a process comprehensible to an European.

One might say that Williams has but one fixed idea, as an author; i.e., he starts where an european wd. start if an european were about to write of America: sic: America is a subject of interest, one must inspect it, analyse it, and treat it as subject. There are plenty of people who think they "ought" to write "about" America. This is an wholly different kettle of fish. There are also numerous people who think that the given subject has an inherent interest simply because it is American and that this gives it ipso facto a dignity or value above all other possible subjects; Williams may even think he has, or may once have thought he had this angle of attack, but he hasn't.

After a number of years, and apropos of a given incident he has (first quarterly number of transition) given a perfectly clear verbal manifestation of his critical attitude. It is that of his most worthy european contemporaries, and of all good critics. It is also symptomatic of New York that his analysis of the so-called criticisms of Antheil's New York concert shd. appear in Paris, a year after the event, in an amateur periodical.

The main point of his article being that no single one of the critics had made the least attempt at analysis, or had in any way tried to tell the reader what the music consisted of, what were its modes or procedures. And that this was, of course, what the critics were, or would in any civilized country have been, there for. This article is perhaps Williams' most important piece of critical writing, or at any rate his most apposite piece; failing a wide distribution of the magazine in which it appeared, it shd. be re-printed in some more widely distributable journal.

As to the illusion of "progress," it wd. seem that this illusion chez nous is limited to the greater prevalence of erotic adventure,

whether developed in quality or merely increased in quantity I have no present means of deciding; as to any corresponding "progress" or catching-up in affairs of the intellect, the illusion wd. seem to rise from the fact that in our literary milieux certain things are now known that were not known in 1912; but this wd. not constitute a change of relation; i.e., wd. not prove that America is not still fifteen years or twenty years or more "behind the times." That is to say we must breed a non-Mabie, non-Howells type of author. And of the possible types Williams and Gould perhaps serve as our best examples -- as distinct from the porous types.

I mean, not by this sentence, but by the whole trend of this article: when a creative act occurs in America "no one" seems aware of what is occurring. In music we have chefs d'orchestre, not composers, and we have something very like it in letters, though the distinction is less obvious.

Following this metaphor, it is undeniable that part of my time, for example, has been put into orchestral directing. Very little of Dr Williams' energy has been so deflected. If he did some Rimbaud forty years late it was nevertheless composition, and I don't think he knew it was Rimbaud until after he finished his operation.

Orchestral directing is "all right" mais c'est pas la même chose. We are still so generally obsessed by monism and monotheistical backwash, and ideas of orthodoxy that we (and the benighted Britons) can hardly observe a dissociation of ideas without thinking a censure is somehow therein implied.

We are not, of course we are not, free from the errors of post-reformation Europe. The triviality of philosophical writers through the last few centuries is extraordinary, in the extent that is, that they have not profited by modes of thought quite common to biological students; in the extent that they rely on wholly unfounded assumptions, for no more apparent reason than that these assumptions are currently and commonly made. Reputed philosophers will proceed (for volumes at a time) as if the only alternative for monism were dualism ; among distinguished literati, si licet, taking personal examples: Mr Joyce will argue for hours as if one's attack on Christianity were an attack on the Roman church in favour of Luther or Calvin or some other half-baked ignoramus and the "protestant" conventicle. Mr Eliot will reply, even in print, to Mr Babbitt as if some form of Xtianity or monotheism were the sole alternative to irreligion; and as if monism or monotheism were anything more than an hypothesis agreeable to certain types of very lazy mind too weak to bear an uncertainty or to remain in "uncertainty."

And, again, for such reasons William Williams, and may we

say, his Mediterranean equipment, has an importance in relation to his temporal intellectual circumjacence.

Very well, he does not "conclude"; his work has been "often formless," "incoherent," opaque, obscure, obfuscated, confused, truncated, etc.

I am not going to say: "form" is a non-literary component shoved onto literature by Aristotle or by some non-literatus who told Aristotle about it. Major form is not a non-literary component. But it can do us no harm to stop an hour or so and consider the number of very important chunks of world-literature in which form, major form, is remarkable mainly for absence.

There is a corking plot to the Iliad, but it is not told us in the poem, or at least not in the parts of the poem known to history as The Iliad. It wd. be hard to find a worse justification of the theories of dramatic construction than the Prometheus of Aeschylus. It will take a brighter lad than the author of these presents to demonstrate the element of form in Montaigne or in Rabelais; Lope has it, but it is not the "Aristotelian" beginning, middle and end, it is the quite reprehensible: Beginning Whoop and any sort of a trail off. Bouvard and Pécuchet wasn't even finished by its author. And of all these Lope is the only one we cd. sacrifice without inestimable loss and impoverishment.

The component of these great works and the indispensable component is texture; which Dr Williams indubitably has in the best, and in increasingly frequent, passages of his writing.

3

In current American fiction that has often quite a good deal of merit, and which has apparently been concocted with effort and goodish intentions, the failure to attain first-rateness seems to be mainly of two sorts: The post-Zolas or post-realists deal with subject matter, human types etc, so simple that one is more entertained by Fabre's insects or Hudson's birds and wild animals; and the habits or the reactions of "an ant" or "a chaffinch" emerge in a more satisfactory purity or at least in some modus that at least seems to present a more firm and sustaining pabulum to reflection.

Secondly: there are the perfumed writers. They aim, one believes, at olde lavender; but the ultimate aroma lacks freshness. "Stale meringue," "last week's custard" and other metaphorical expressions leap to mind when one attempts to give an impression of their quality. One "ought" perhaps to make a closer analysis

and give the receipt for the fadeur; though like all mediocre dilutions it is harder to analyse than the clearer and fresher substance. When I was fourteen people used to read novels of the same sort, let us say *The House of a Thousand Candles* etc of which one may remember a title, but never remembers anything else, and of which the author's name has, at the end of five or ten years, escaped one.

It is perfectly natural that people wholly surrounded by rough-necks, whether in mid-nineteenth century or in the Hesperian present, should want to indicate the desirability of sweetness and refinement, but . . . these things belong to a different order of existence, different that is from pity, terror, *ri xadév*, and those things with which art, plastic or that of the writer is concerned.

Now in reading Williams, let us say this last book *A Voyage to Pagany* or almost anything else he has written, one may often feel: he is wrong. I don't mean wrong in idea, but: that is the wrong way to write it. He oughtn't to have said that. But there is a residue of effect. The work is always distinct from the writing that one finds merely hopeless and in strict sense irremediable.

There is a difference in kind between it and the mass of current writing, about which there is: just nothing to be done, and which no series of retouches, or cuttings away wd. clarify, or leave hard,

Art very possibly ought to be the supreme achievement, the "accomplished"; but there is the other satisfactory effect, that of a man hurling himself at an indomitable chaos, and yanking and hauling as much of it as possible into some sort of order (or beauty), aware of it both as chaos and as potential.

Form is, indeed, very tiresome when in reading current novel, we observe the thinning residue of pages, 50, 30, and realize that there is now only time (space) for the hero to die a violent death, no other solution being feasible in that number of pages.

To come at it another way: There are books that are clever enough, good enough, well enough done to fool the people who don't know, or to divert one in hours of fatigue. There are other books -- and they may be often less clever, and may often show less accomplishment -- which, despite their ineptitudes, and lack of accomplishment, or "form," and finish, contain something for the best minds of the time, a time, any time. If *Pagany* is not Williams' best book, if even on some counts, being his first long work, it is his worst, it indubitably contains pages and passages that are worth any one's while, and that provide mental cud for any ruminant tooth.

And finally, to comply with those requirements for critics which Dr Williams has outlined in his censure of Mr Antheil's critics: The particular book that is occasion for this general discussion of Williams, *A Voyage to Pagany*,¹ has not very much to do with the "art of novel writing," which Dr Williams has fairly clearly abjured. Its plot-device is the primitive one of "a journey," frankly avowed. Entire pages could have found place in a simple autobiography of travel.

In the genealogy of writing it stems from *Ulysses*, or rather we wd. say better: Williams' *The Great American Novel* 80 pages, Three Mountains Press 1923 was Williams' first and strongest derivation from *Ulysses*, an "inner monologue," stronger and more gnarled, or stronger because more gnarled at least as I see it, than the *Pagany*.

The other offspring from *Ulysses*, the only other I have seen possessing any value is John Rodker's "Adolphe 1920." The two books are greatly different. The *Gt. American Novel* is simply the application of Joycean method to the American circumjacence. The *Adolphe*, professedly taking its schema from Benjamin Constant, brings the Joycean methodic inventions into a form; slighter than *Ulysses*, as a *rondeau* is slighter than a *canzone*, but indubitably a "development," a definite step in general progress of writing, having as have at least two other novels by Rodker, its definite shaped construction. And yet, if one read it often enough the element of form emerges in the *great American Novel*, not probably governing the whole, but in the shaping of at least some of the chapters, notably Chapter VII, the one beginning "Nuevo Mundo."

As to subject or problem, the *Pagany* relates to the Jamesian problem of U. S. A. vs. Europe, the international relation etc; the particular equation of the Vienna milieu has had recent treatment "from the other end on" in Joseph Bard's *Shipwreck in Europe*, more sprightly and probably less deeply concerned with the salvation of the protagonist; I think the continental author mentions as a general and known post-war quantity: the American or Americans who comes or come to Vienna to find out why they can't enjoy life, even after getting a great deal of money.

In the *American Grain* remains, I imagine Dr Williams' book having the greater interest for the European reader. In the looseish structure of the *Pagany* I don't quite make out what, unless it be simple vagary of the printer, has caused the omission of *The Venus* (July Dial), pages obviously written to occur somewhere in the longer work, though they do form a whole in them-

selves, and pose quite clearly the general question, or at least one phase of the question posed in the Pagany.

In all the books cited, the best pages of Williams -- at least for the present reviewer -- are those where he has made the least effort to fit anything into either story, book, or (In the American Grain) into an essay. I wd. almost move from that isolated instance to the generalization that plot, major form, or outline shd. be left to authors who feel some inner need for the same; even let us a very strong, unusual, unescapable need for these things; and to books where the said form, plot, etc, springs naturally from the matter treated. When put on, ab exteriore they probably lead only to dulness, confusion or remplissage or the "falling between two stools." I don't mean that Williams "falls"; he certainly has never loaded on enough shapings to bother one. As to his two dialectical ladies? Of course he may know ladies who argue like that. There may be ladies who so argue, aided by Bacchus. In any case the effect of one human on another is such that Williams may elicit such dialectic from ladies who in presence of a more dialectic or voluble male wd. be themselves notably less so. No one else now writing wd. have given us sharp clarity of the medical chapters.

As to the general value of Carlos Williams' poetry I have nothing to retract from the affirmation of its value that I made ten years ago, nor do I see any particular need of repeating that estimate; I shd. have to say the same things, and it wd. be with but a pretence or camouflage of novelty.

When an author preserves, by any means whatsoever, his integrity, I take it we ought to be thankful. We retain a liberty to speculate as to how he might have done better, what paths wd. conduce to, say progress in his next opus, etc. to ask whether for example Williams wd. have done better to read W. H. Hudson than to have been interested in Joyce. At least there is place for reflection as to whether the method of Hudson's *A Traveller in Little Things* wd. serve for an author so concerned with his own insides as is Williams; or whether Williams himself isn't at his best -- retaining interest in the uncommunicable or the hidden roots of the consciousness of people he meets, but yet confining his statement to presentation of their objective manifests.

No one but a fanatic impressionist or a fanatic subjectivist or introversionalist will try to answer such a question save in relation to a given specific work.

1 A Voyage to Pagany. By William Carlos Williams. 10mo. 338 pages. The Macaulay Company. \$2.50,

1 The Tempers: Elkin Matthews; 1913. Al Que Quiere: The Four Seas Company; 1917. Kora in Hell: The Four Seas Company; 1920. Sour Grapes: The Four Seas Company; 1921. The Great American Novel: Three Mountains Press; 1923. In the American Grain: Albert and Charles Boni; 1925. A Voyage to Pagany: The Macaulay Company; 1928,

TWO POEMS

BY WITTER BYNNER

REMEMBERING

You are between my breaths, the out and in,
Closer than my own mind. If I begin

To think of you, you interrupt my will

With heart-beats that are lightning in me still --
As they were when by a look you let me know
That you would be beside me and then go...

VIGIL

Let me no longer separate my share

From the lot of other men; but let me dare
To be more forlorn than a man alone can be,
And yet more heartened by this adversity
Common to them and me and levelling all.
There never was singleness in a funeral.

Yet with each thought I take of life, your eyes
Are widened open and your limbs arise
Beautiful again, not only as they were

When I could touch your lips and feel them stir
The life that was theirs to laugh with and mine to love,
But by some miracle leaning above

My own in the same tender sacrament

Of night as when together we were blent.
Wherever love is, let me yield and share

This love of yours, and so be better aware

Of my beloved than I was, before

The door that seemed to close became no door.

IMPASSE AND IMAGERY

Book review by William Carlos Williams

The Boy In The Sun. By Paul Rosenfeld. sr2mo.
266 pages. The Macaulay Company. \$2.

"A JEW he is, being like Judaism, which was the father of Christianity, the dark and massive materialistic religion that engendered the ivory-white faith which was all spirit, the religion of burnt offerings and vows of vengeance to which in times of stress men and peoples return, letting the new faith die."

This is not Rosenfeld, but an image from a recent article by Rebecca West.

No. In the modern world we neither rise up from Judaism nor return to it. We do something else. So does David. I remember Paul Rosenfeld, in 1922 I think it was, standing up nervously on the platform of The Wanamaker Store Auditorium one winter's afternoon and reading a paper in defence of E. E. Cummings' *The Enormous Room*, attacking the publishers of the book for their evident neglect to back it as they should. This is the same spirit that animates "Divvy" before the impasse which life presents to him.

When we Scotch and the rest say "people," we mean ourselves. When under stress we give up the lightly held precepts of Christianity which have nothing integral to do with us, we return not to Judaism, but to our native paganism. That is why we detest the Jew, to whom Christianity would be natural, and from whom it sprang. We hate him because of a racial instinct, because he con-

firms in us our own bastardy.

It's a good story, all about a little Jewish boy that grew up in New York. It starts in scenes of Old Testament' violence, but comes out in the end on the banks of the Hudson River in April. As to the writing -- ? But who cares about the writing of a novel. so long as the story moves and is interesting?

I think *The Boy in the Sun* contains about the best writing Rosenfeld has done to date. No doubt of it. And when he falls down I think this book discloses the cause. He is trying for an extremely difficult colour differentiation and naturally, especially in English and in America, this is no cinch. I admire a man who aims for a difficult veracity of style. Nor will I acknowledge that I am influenced by the memory of The Wanamaker Auditorium and Rosenfeld's ceaseless impersonal activity in the New York field for what he believes fine.

The writing is good, when it is good. That is to say it is still beset with old faults of emotional daubing which makes it sometimes -- to me -- entirely undecipherable. I dislike intransitive verbs used transitively. I dislike "twilit." But then again the sentences are crisp, yet the imagery remains delicate, diaphanous, silky, and full of light. The evocation of the girl seen in the park of Evelyn in the theatre box, could not be more precisely yet delicately true. There is no sentimentality, but a sensitive, excellently drawn image.

A RUSSIAN IN JAPAN

Review by John Cournos

Korni Yaponskavo Sointsa (Roots of the Japanese Sun). By Boris Pilniak. 186 pages. Leningrad: Priboy. 1928.

NOTHING written about Japan since Lafcadio Hearn is so rich in interest as this small volume by a young Russian novelist whose work is not wholly unknown to the English-reading public. His fiction is good; but this, an authentic book of travel, is better. The writer confesses to a serious handicap: an ignorance of Japanese; this lack is more than compensated for by a vivid power of observation, keen analysis, and an enquiring mind capable of advantageously correlating the facts at hand. Above all, he possesses a sense of history, in this instance a double-edged gift, since it allows him to answer some vital questions concerning the

most progressive of the Eastern races, yet urges him to the asking of other questions for which he has no answer. But the putting of relevant questions serves a function by no means to be despised. Pilniak frankly sees in Japan a mystery; he expounds the nature of the mystery in a series of pictures, episodes, encounters, and reinforces what he has seen and heard with his own mental and emotional reactions -- valuable because, in spite of the confusion to which they have subjected the author (or, perhaps, because of it!) they do juxtapose with graphic lucidity the Western and Eastern aspects of things.

"Japan," says Pilniak, "is our outstanding refutation of Spengler's theory; for it is a land which has already existed a thousand years, a contemporary of Greece, and a niece of Assyria and Egypt."

The mystery is this: how could the little nation manage to learn and adopt in so short a time all that Europe had to teach it in the way of mechanization and thought, yet keep its own ancient character and integrity? The mind of Japan -- that is, the mind that was, before Commodore Peary, the American, and Admiral Putanin, the Russian, used their squadrons to force that country's gates open to the world -- has remained changeless and closed to the European. Externally, 'the changes have been little short of cataclysmic; there has been a whole-hearted adoption of Western machinery ; in such devices the Japanese are not a whit behind us. Yet there has been no perceptible change in Japanese psychology, While the Westerners live and build in affirmation of the future, the Japanese base all their actions on the past. "It is a land of corpses; corpses are in command here" -- so that when the students of Tokyo University were given a questionnaire as to what they intended to do with their future, the immense majority declared that they were Socialists and wanted to bring children into the world worthy of their ancestors. Nevertheless, these "corpses" are unusually active and have achieved their present place in the world by sheer will-power. While keeping their counsel, they have deliberately set out to learn all that Europe and America have to teach them. There is not a little irony in the fact that the two nations most assiduously watched by them are the United States and Russia. "From America," writes Pilniak, "Japan wants to take her machines; from us, Russians, her spiritual culture." She is avidly consuming Russian books in translation; hardly a classic or contemporary work of note but has been translated into Japanese. The Communist author feels shamefaced before his brothers in Nippon, for he knows that not one of them would undertake a journey into Russia without having learned the language first.

What does Japan intend to do with her newly gained power? For notwithstanding Spengler, this aged nation, far from being decrepit as she should be, is showing every indication of youth. She is, in fact, that extraordinary thing so rarely met with: youth

-- with the assimilated experience of age. (It is in the matter of this singular combination that Spengler breaks down.) But the riddle of Japan's destination is unanswered by Pilniak. He can only reiterate graphic instances to show that the riddle exists. But we would not have any of them away. They make the book, and we read on, for the most part oblivious of the ultimate problem that the author has so much at heart, and never solves.

More than one episode points to what is, perhaps, the supreme virtue of the Japanese: self-control. There is its attendant quality: courage. Jarrings from volcanoes, always in readiness, have through many generations trained the people to face danger in a mood of fatalistic calm. Native eye-witnesses have described to the author scenes from the terrible catastrophe in 1923.

"The first movement of the Japanese in the earthquake was not to move at all, but to look around, decide, organize the nerves. Those forty thousand who perished on one of the Tokyo squares perished thus: all around them were burning houses, they were being showered with flaming firebrands, they were being smothered by the flames...There was no way of escape. When, after the conflagration, the survivors went to look for the dead, they found the blackened corpses lying in perfect order . . . under the corpses were found live children. The adults, organizing their last moments, had died without panic, almost without panic, and with their charred bodies had saved their children. . . ."

This is in keeping with the Japanese scorn of individual death. When the prisoners of war returned to their native land after the Russo-Japanese war they were subjected to contempt for "not having found time to drive a sword into their bowels" ; even their own families refused to have anything to do with them.

Pilniak has a great deal to say of Japanese writers, at whose invitation he had come to Japan. The encounter with Titia-san is especially interesting. They had been drinking saké together and when the drink had made the company convivial one of the authors, acting as interpreter, interpreted for Titia-san:

"The father of Titia-san had been killed by a Russian at Mukden, during the Russo-Japanese war. Titia-san, then a boy, had made a vow to avenge his father by killing the first Russian he happened to meet. The first Russian he has met is yourself. He ought to kill you. But he, Titia-san, is a writer -- and you are a writer. He, Titia-san, knows that the brotherhood of art is above blood. And so he suggests that you drink saké with him in brotherly fashion, according to the Japanese custom, by exchanging cups -- in memory of the fact that he, Titia-san, has broken his vow.

In this connexion, an absorbing chapter deals with the literature and art of Japan, especially the theatre. We learn that the most revolutionary theatre of Japan is the theatre of Osanai-san, which would nowadays be considered reactionary in Russia, since the method pursued is that of Stanislavsky in the Moscow Art Theatre. On the other hand, the whole tendency of the most revolutionary theatre in Russia -- that of Meyerhold -- is in the direction of the traditional theatre of Japan. Again, the inevitable historic irony. When East and West meet, they exchange virtues,

Pilniak has some amusing things to tell of his brief stay in China. He appeared on the platform to deliver a lecture, when a policeman politely told him that he might sing or dance but not speak. As a way out of his dilemma, a Chinese seriously suggested that he sing his lecture; but the author could scarcely see the matter in that light, and retired crestfallen.

BRIEFER MENTION

Minstrelsy of Marne, Folk-Songs and Ballads of the Woods and the Coast, collected by Fannie H. Eckstorm and Mary W. Smyth (10mo, 390 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$3.50). The fruits evidently justify the labours of enthusiasm through more than a few years that must have gone into the collection and editing of these numerous folk-songs. Whether the reader accept or not the editor's view that poetry is "the way you feel about a thing," he is bound to be entertained and absorbed in being so close to the uncomplicated jubilation of these sailors and loggers as he gets in such songs as *The Little Brown Bulls*, *Canday-I-O*, *The Little Barber*, *The Wesley Shackers*, *The Banks of Newfoundland*. That this is possible is due not alone to the songs themselves, but to the setting of local reference afforded in many cases by the indefatigable researches of the editors and the co-operation of the numerous contributors. The book merits a place in any collection which includes such volumes as Sandburg's *American Songbag*, or Lomax's *Cowboy Songs*, or Louise Pound's *American Ballads and Songs*.

Five Eighteenth-Century Comedies, selected and edited by Allardyce Nicoll (18mo; The World's Classics, Oxford University Press, American Branch: 80 cents) presents five comedies of the time of Garrick and "may provide at least an outline background for the work of Goldsmith and Sheridan." Moments in each are amusing and in each 4 character, an episode, or an attitude indicates to us where some of the stock characters of comedy and melodrama, of our own time, stem from. But on the whole they are not very entertaining and only one, *Speed the Plough*, the comedy in which Mrs Grundy so magnificently fails to appear in person, is good reading throughout.

The Life and Private History of Emily Jane Bronte, by Romer Wilson (8vo, 281 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$4). Miss Romer Wilson expresses herself with individuality and force. Her enthusiasm for her subject compensates one for a certain immaturity and provincialism in her manner of writing, a lack of polish and philosophical detachment. Hers is a personal interpretation, and as such it does succeed in leaving in one's mind a vivid and moving impression of the singular and passionate girl whom the author informs us had "a man's soul in a female body."

A History of Printing, Its Development Through Five Hundred Years, by John Clyde Oswald (8vo, 404 pages; Appleton: \$7.50). A book primarily intended for bibliophiles and virtuosos in the art of printing, this beautifully illustrated volume includes so many lively biographical details about the early printers that it has much interest for the layman. The extension of the art from its beginnings in Strasburg, Augsburg, Nuremberg, Cologne, to Venice and Paris is emphasized in significant facsimiles of format and ornament until the clearness of the Latin and Greek types of the Aldus Press becomes an astonishing revelation to the uninitiated. The vivid sketch of the personality of Aldus Manutius surpasses anything recorded of the other great printers, from Badius and Froben to Baskerville and Morris; and as one notes how much more readable is Aldus' Greek and Latin than Caxton's English, one closes this engaging book with added veneration for the incomparable Venetian.

The Future of an Illusion, by Sigmund Freud, translated by W. D. Robson-Scott, Number 15 of The International Psycho-Analytical Library, edited by Ernest Jones (8vo, 98 pages; Hogarth Press, 6s: Horace Liveright, \$2) considers the psychological importance of religious ideas in the preservation of cultures, and concludes that in the past they have been invaluable in reconciling the masses of men, both to the uncertainties of their physical destiny and to the necessary repression of individual instincts upon which every genuine civilization is premised. Now, however, in the opinion of the author, religious ideas are deprived of efficacy, since the advance of knowledge has shown them to be illusions -- in fact a form of neurosis, to be eliminated only by proper education of the individual at the proper season. The first part of the essay is a concise and admirable account of the psychological conditions of civilization, but the rest is prolegomena and declarative notes rather than the consecutive, or persuasive, development of a thesis. Professor Freud has been fortunate in his translator.

Excerpt from **THE THEATRE**
BY GILBERT SELDES

Missing the opening of *The Front Page* by a day or two,
I found myself with the great majority of those trying to get in
and failing. It has had a great press, and if you merely want

to think about the theatre, instead of going, the reception of this play will give you a subject. It is, even apart from the identity of the producer, the obvious successor to Broadway -- and promises to have as long and satisfactory a life.

Missing that one, I was not compelled to make comparisons in the case of *Gentlemen of the Press* which intended to be utterly different, a comedy of newspaper manners, and should either have come first or persuaded the reviewers to forget its predecessor. The best thing about this play is the genuine feeling for character it showed in several of the principal parts. The newspaper men were newspaper men as every cub reporter and every experienced city editor has known them: hard-boiled about other people's important affairs and sentimental about their own trivial ones, easily generous, picking up and discarding all sorts of women, drinking and swearing off, driven by their work and enjoying it and hating it. The actual plot was not so important, but it served to bring on Helen Flint who not only looked very pretty, but played to perfection the type of woman who is intellectually unable to foresee any ending to a conversation except a kiss. So long as she was drifting lightly from one man's arms to another, she held the plot together; but neither the moment when the newspaper man threw up his job as a press agent nor the moment when he chased the vamp out of town to save his own son from her, came entirely out of the characters involved, and the latter had almost nothing to do with the return of the newspaper man to his paper. The colour and the character were both good ; but they did not create the plot in which they appeared.

1 *The Front Page*. By Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur. Introduction by Jed Harris. 12mo. 189 pages. Covici, Friede. \$2.

.....

Goin' Home is a strange play with something genuine working its way through theatricalities, making itself felt, and then being spoiled. It is the story of an American negro who was in the French Army, married a French girl, and stayed her appetite to be off to America by fantastic tales of his wealth at home. An American captain comes in. It is the negro's master, boyhood companion, and friend -- but a Southerner with ideas of racial inequality. He dispels the grandiose illusions the negro has put into his wife's head and then seduces the wife. In the following brawl, a Senegalese, brother in arms of the negro, is about to kill the captain. The negro shoots -- and kills the Senegalese. The rest of the play is unimportant.

By theatricality I mean, for example, the French girl's flirtation with the captain the moment she sees him. Obviously, later, she lures him because she is furious with her husband; but the point is

dulled by the conventional "all French girls are bad" effect of the beginning. And the theme is spoiled at the end because the third act does not carry on the second. Most of this second act is given over to a species of vaudeville carried on by American negro soldiers clustering round the great figure of the Senegalese; to me it seemed that they sang and shot craps and danced for their own enjoyment, the only defect in staging being that one dancer faced the audience in the theatre instead of the audience on the stage. This goes on with the captain and the wife off stage together, the cuckold husband knowing nothing of it and being torn by his love for his wife and his yearning to return to America, to be among the black men again, to know the black man's deep laughter. The Senegalese is the key-note of this laughter; it is racial, primitive, terrible, and free. As he falls dying he cries out, "Toi! Esclave!" It was rather unfortunate that this key line had to be spoken in French; but the obvious obligation of the dramatist was to carry it on to his ending. Instead the two men, white and black, try each to shield the other, taking the murder upon himself, and in the end both go free.

This is a prize play, far above the average. It seems to me that Ransom Rideout, the author, worked his theme out dramatically up to a point and then failed to think it out further. Nevertheless, he has indicated power and an indifference to mere slickness; both of which are desirable.

Mr Earl Carroll's *Vanities*, as far as I am concerned, consist of Frisco and W. C. Fields. Frisco is exactly as he always was, a remarkable example of an entertainer who neither changes nor develops, yet remains among the best. Talent joined with character will sometimes work that way, and by character I mean the capacity to resist imitating others, of remaining incorruptibly one's self. Fields is far more versatile; he has always some surprise for you, and although he appears in some dull and dirty scenes, he himself is always doing a thought-out piece of work; in the good scenes he is most engaging and amusing. Two or three manoeuvres of the chorus and one or two elaborate "conceptions" come off well; the rest positively took me back to the days of my youth, to obscure and second-rate musical shows of 1910. The music I found terrible, the settings uninteresting, the mass display of bodies not particularly well done. Nevertheless, with two stars and a terrific go, the VaNniTIEs manage to please vast audiences; and I was more surprised than shocked by the smoking-car jokes.

Concerning the movies: *The Patriot* is as good as the best reports say it is. You easily forget the atrocious attempt to make it a vocal film and you do not forget Jannings or Lubitsch. The talking films so far have been pretty terrible, especially those which attempt drama. No matter what the producers say, you are seeing

a movie and hearing a loudspeaker at the same time. Up to this time the directors have sacrificed the movie to the speaker. When they stop doing that, there may be more to say in favour of the novelty. The short subjects are to be listened to without pain and the synchronized news reel is superb. The non-vocal movies seen at the same time were, with the exception of *The Patriot*, as bad as the vocal ones, but less of a strain.

DECEMBER

TOLSTOY

BY THOMAS MANN

Translated From the German by Hildegard Nagel

HE had the stature of the nineteenth century, this giant, who bore epic burdens, under which our quick-breathing and more fragile generation would sink. How great was this period, in all its sombreness, its materialism, its scientific inflexibility and asceticism; how great was that race of writers to which Tolstoy belonged, whose creations dominate the five decades before 1900. Does any cosmic insight that we may have, or are beginning to have, does our yet timid dream of a gladder and more confident humanity, justify us in underestimating, as is now our habit, that earlier time; since after all it would be difficult to deny that from the moral stand-point we have fallen far below its level? In striking contrast with it, our detachment and complacent undervaluing of thought and human dignity would not have been tolerated by the "fatalistic" nineteenth century; and while the war was raging, I often reflected that it would not have had the temerity to break out if in 1914 the sharp penetrating grey eyes of the old man of Yasnaya Polyana had still been upon us. A childish thought, perhaps. At any rate, history had ordained it; he was gone and left no one like him. The reins of Europe fell slack with no hand to guide them, and are without one to-day. Tolstoy has said of *Childhood and Adolescence*, one of his early works: "Without false modesty . . . , it is something like the *Iliad*." It was literally true and only in a superficial way is the assertion yet more applicable to the giant-work of his maturity, *War and Peace*. The Homeric, the typically-epic, was perhaps - more marked in Tolstoy than in any other man of genius. In his work is the heaving might and rhythmic uniformity of the sea, its pristine vigour, its native pungency, imperishable health, and deathless realism. For surely it is permissible to see and feel these things as one, health and realism -- the world of plastic form, of instinct, of high kinship with nature on the one hand, contrasting with, as I once tried to suggest in a more comprehensive way, the

world of hyper-susceptibility and mental aristocracy, Schiller's world of the ideal, Dostoevsky's apocalyptic world of shadows, Goethe and Tolstoy -- when their names were first linked together in criticism, surprise and doubt were aroused; but recent psychological studies have enabled us to take such comparisons for granted. To elaborate the parallel beyond the generically-typical would be pedantic caprice. We need not dwell upon the too obvious and predetermined differences of mind, country, or period. As soon as we advert to culture -- that formula which implies nature's groping after mind and the inevitable impulse of mind towards nature -- we must abandon the too facile analogy. We ought to be honest enough to admit that to those who possess Goethe, Tolstoy's absurd, naively tragic reaching after culture must present the spectacle at once pathetic and sublime, of a child-like barbarian's noble but futile striving towards what is true and human.

Nevertheless, this very Titanic helplessness, recalling the swollen, straining muscles of one of Michael Angelo's tortured creations, lends tremendous moral force to him as an artist. As a story-teller he is without equal; his art, even when he no longer had use for it, except as a means of furthering a dubious and depressing kind of moralizing, affords to any receptive talent (there can be no other) unfailing strength, refreshment, and elemental joy. Not at all with a view to imitating, for who could imitate? He has no following which could accurately be termed a school. Tolstoy's influence, indeed, whether on the spirit or form of a work, makes itself felt in very different ways, and above all, in writings quite unrelated to his own. But even as he, an Antaeus, received fresh creative strength from each contact with earth, so the world of his mighty art is to us, earth and nature -- a reincarnation of itself. To reread him, to let that preternaturally sharp of the lower animals cast its spell on us, the force of his imagery, and limpid clarity of style untinctured with mysticism, so reminiscent of Goethe, is to find release from every phase of artificiality and useless frivolity, a return to what in each of us is fundamentally wholesome.

Merezhkovski has called him the great prophet of the body, in contrast with Dostoevsky, the prophet of the mind. In fact, the soundness of Tolstoy's art consists in its corporeality. Where we have psychology, we have also pathology. Disease derives from the mind, health from the body. Dostoevsky has given us an analysis of Anna Karenina, full of insight and love, reminding us of Schiller's affectionate eulogy of Wilhelm Meister; but Tolstoy was naturally without comprehension of Dostoevsky. For a moment, at the time of Dostoevsky's death, Tolstoy imagined that "he had been very fond of this man," but he had never previously troubled himself about the author of the Brothers Karamazoff and remarks dropped in conversation might have been

made by a dunce. "The man was sick himself," he said, "and made all things appear sick." Supposing this to be true, it is an unprofitable truth, as though it should be said of Nietzsche "No, no, from the sick can come only sickness"; which would be not only unworthy but the reverse of the truth. Tolstoy's judgements were those of a great man, arbitrary, objective, and uncompromisingly literal. One need not go back to his unfavourable comparison of Shakespeare, as immoral, with Uncle Tom's Cabin. But has he dealt more "justly" with his own work? Certainly not when he discarded his Titanic masterpieces as irrelevant and harmful beguilements. Earlier, indeed, while writing Anna Karenina, that very greatest novel of society, he threw the manuscript aside as rubbish, again and again; and had no higher regard for it later. This is hardly to be looked upon as mere morbid self-depreciation. He would not have tolerated such criticism from another. His standard of measurement was one he had found in himself. And such impatient disparagement of his own work is contradictorily an artist's acknowledgement of a self transcending his work. It may be a case of having to be more than the thing one creates; of greatness having its origin in something still greater. Apocalyptic wonders such as Leonardo, Goethe, Tolstoy, support the supposition. But why had Tolstoy never the apologetic attitude to his prophesying and sectarian doctrine, his ideas of moral improvement, that he has shown towards his artistic creations? Why has he never once held them up to ridicule? One is justified perhaps in this inference: since he is greater than his art, he would, naturally, be greater than his ideas. Ah, yes -- Tolstoy's opinions! Regarded as revelations, for that was their true character, autocratic pronouncements of what we call "personality" receiving authority from the workings of that natural magic which turned the manor-house in the Province of Tula into a shrine for distressed humanity, a world-centre radiating vitality and healing. Vitality and greatness, greatness and power, in what degree are they synonymous? It is the problem of the "great man"; we have groped for its solution throughout the ages and find it in the Chinese theory of practical democracy -- in the proverb which so offends our ears: A great man is a public misfortune. European instinct has been and now is for an aesthetic justification of the phenomenon. However, in matters of leadership, education, and progress, there remains, to put it mildly, a doubt, whether the function or even the existence of a great man may, without straining the truth, be so much as brought into relation with these things, whether he may not be purely incidental, an explosion of force without moral significance; touching in his effort to give himself a moral interpretation -- that effort made by the prophet of Yasnaya Polyana with such praiseworthy ineptitude, embarrassed as he was by the absurdity of his disciples How blessed that life! Blessed in every phase of its tragedy and devout tragi-comedy as power rather than thought; for even the moral sensibility and aspiration of this portentous life teem with

expressions of physical exuberance. The incentive? Horror of death in an organism whose thinking was only another manifestation of its immense vitality. We should be frank, without fear of belittling what is great. Even at the last, that famous withdrawal of the saint from home and household signifies as much at least as the social and religious impulse toward salvation, the instinctive flight of a dying animal.

But why should the so beautiful solemn words of Goethe haunt me

"Denkt er immer sich ins Rechte?
Ist er ewig schön und gross?"

What modesty, what moral contagion lie in the endeavour to subdue inherent creative power -- under no exterior compulsion -- to "the search of truth alone" and to dedicate one's vital momentum to the service of humanity and the spirit! Though Tolstoy's genius may have miscarried a hundred times and his thought stumbled into childish, benighted, unbecoming digressions, his laborious anguish will always be "beautiful and great." It had its source in the perception of a very profound truth. Tolstoy realized that a new era was at hand, an age which would not be satisfied with an art serving merely to enhance life, but which would put socially significant virtues -- leadership, decisiveness, and clear thought -- above individual genius; and value morality and intelligence more than irresponsible beauty; and he never sinned against his innate greatness, never claimed a "great man's" licence to work confusion, atavism, and evil, but to the best of his understanding, in complete humility, laboured for that which is divinely reasonable.

I seem to be presenting him as a pattern. We are a little, at all events a circumscribed, Central European race compared with his, we writers of to-day.

Nothing can absolve us, and least of all fear of ridicule, or the reproaches and contempt of fools, should we fail to accept the challenge of our time and of our conscience, each among his own people, sincerely to "search out truth alone."

MR COSTYVE DUDITCH
BY JEAN TOOMER

IT was a helter-skelter early-spring day in Chicago. Draughts of wind swept through the huge corridor formed by the tall

buildings which flanked Michigan Boulevard ; and where the bridge crossed the Chicago River, air currents from the lake blew in, met with opposing gusts, and set up odd swirls which made it difficult for pedestrians to know their footing. One minute, they had to lean forward against the wind; the next, they had to brace themselves back against it. Faces were tense. Shirts and coats waved and beat and flapped. People clutched their hats.

Mr J. Breastbuck Coleeb was making headway northward up the avenue, approaching the four skyscrapers which stood at each corner of the bridge. « On the near side, the London Life Building, and the new skyscraper called 333. And, on the far side, across the river, the Tribune tower, with its suggestions of Gothic architecture, and the white, unshapely mass of the Wrigley Building.

Coleeb was a man in the early forties, well trained in the natural sciences and a rather keen observer of human conduct. From the behaviour of the human species, more than from the behaviour of animals, birds, or insects, he derived much amusement. Squarely built, he gave the impression of being vigorous and rough-and-tumble. The cast of his features was alternately skeptical and humorous. As he drove forward, his jaws were clenched and looked as though he were biting hard on the stem of a pipe. The characteristic squint of his eyes was exaggerated in an effort to keep flying dirt from entering them.

He shot a glance upward at the high vault of grey-blue sky, and, as if from a sky vantage point, he looked down and saw himself, together with several hundred of his fellow creatures, being bullied by the winds. This spectacular concert of biped antics struck him humorously. And then he smiled satirically at the thought that he, a human intelligence, in this trivial circumstance, was giving sufficient evidence of man's helplessness in Nature.

He seemed to be hurrying; but this was more because of his struggle with the wind currents than because of a feeling of urgency to be exactly on time for his appointment in the Wrigley Building at 10:00 A. M.

As he neared the bridge, he glanced up and across the river to note the clock on the Wrigley tower. Seeing that he was fifteen minutes early, he returned to scanning with interest the faces he passed by.

And then he chanced to catch a glimpse of something which gave him a shock of unexpected recollection. He noticed, on the farther side of the bridge, coming rapidly towards him, a velour hat of light green colour and peculiar shape, a bent head, and a smart morning suit. The sight made Coleeb instantly exclaim to himself:

"As I live! Costyve Duditch!" Then he added: "In his setting."

The figure sped nearer, allowing Coleeb to see its characteristic short-legged gait, its grey spats, its standing collar. He had no doubt of it.

"Here he comes!" exclaimed Coleeb, opening his eyes wide as one does when viewing a racing auto draw near. He exaggerated his expression of amazement.

No sooner had the words been uttered, than Mr Costyve Duditch, he in fact, moving with a velocity which was extraordinary in the face of such uncertain winds, and among so many people -- Mr Costyve Duditch was on and past him. Much as if he had in truth witnessed the approach and passing of a speedy mechanical object, Coleeb jerked himself around and viewed Costyve's departure.

"There he goes!" Coleeb exclaimed, and his face broke into a good-humoured grin. "The rascal! Didn't notice me. Wonder when he arrived in town. I must speak to the dear fellow."

His decision to do so was hastened to action by the fact that passers-by along the bridge jostled him and met his stationary figure with unfriendly eyes. Standing there gazing at the rapidly departing figure of Costyve, he was impeding the pedestrian traffic. So, coming to his normal senses, senses which had been somewhat shocked out of balance by Costyve's glancing impact, Coleeb started in hot pursuit of his old friend Duditch.

"Hey there! Costyve!" he called, when he had almost overtaken him.

Costyve stopped dead, with hunched shoulders. For a few seconds he neither turned nor budged, but looked as though he were holding himself in blankness prior to some catastrophic onslaught. Then his face brightened and he wheeled around just in time to grasp the hand which otherwise would have clapped him on the back a trifle too vigorously.

"Costyve!" Coleeb exclaimed, as the two men shook hands and looked variously, but both with large smiles, each in the other's face.

"You rascal! You passed me on the bridge and didn't see me."

Costyve smiled with delighted apology, snapped his eyes, and rubbed one of them.

"No wonder," said Coleeb. "We'll need goggles to keep out the

dirt, and gas masks to protect our lungs from carbon monoxide before long. When did you get to town?"

"Yesterday," Costyve confessed.

"And leaving to-night?" asked Coleeb, showing his familiarity with the fact that Costyve was continually coming and going from town to town, from country to country.

Costyve nodded in his peculiar way expressive of delighted apology. He seemed to be delighted with the world; apologetic for himself. Delighted with life; apologetic for his own contribution to it.

"Where have you been this time?"

"A short trip," answered Costyve. "To Spain -- Toledo and the Balearic Islands."

"Well!" said Coleeb. "How was it?"

"Fantastic! Topping!" Costyve responded, enthusiastically.

"You must tell me about it. When am I going to see you? You leave to-night? Where were you last time?"

"Constantinople," Costyve answered.

"And before that?"

"Persia."

"And before that?"

"Peking," answered Costyve.

"By God!" Coleeb exclaimed, "'you do get around, don't you?" And then he told him: "Everybody's been wondering about you."

Costyve brightened and said: "Conceive it!" which was his way of phrasing, "You don't say!" It was evident that it pleased him very much to know that people remembered him and thought of him.

"Yes, indeed," said Coleeb. "We've been wondering where you were, and when you'd come back. Why don't you let people know when you are coming?"

At this question, Costyve immediately showed by a quick batting of his eyelids, and by the protective way in which he drew in his

lips and chin, that he was embarrassed. Indeed, with his friends, Costyve wanted to evade the personal factor in his comings and goings. To travel, yes. To see all manner of things, yes, yes! But he was a little touchy on the subject that he, Duditch, personally, moved about so much. Hoping to avoid any mention of this, it was a trick of his to arrive in town unannounced; and then, when discovered by someone, he usually tried to give the impression that he had been there all along. But he had not been able to work this technique on Coleeb.

"It is such a bother," he answered, off-hand, but could not hide the fact that he was telling a fib and knew it.

Just then, someone bumped into him. Standing there on the crowded boulevard, the wonder was that it hadn't happened before. So Coleeb suggested that they move out of the way of the pedestrians and find shelter from the wind. They stood in the entrance of a near-by building.

"A bother for whom?" asked Coleeb, feeling that he wanted to have it out with Costyve, "for you or for your friends?"

"For both, I fear," answered Duditch, and fidgeted.

"What is it?" Coleeb asked, rather bluntly, and knowing that he had placed his old friend on uncomfortable ground. "You shy from what you fear may be their criticisms of your wanderings? You feel they think you are a sort of aimless globe-trotter, the proverbial rolling stone which gathers no moss?"

"Something like that," Costyve answered, with simple directness. For a short while he lowered his head.

"Well, what if they do?" asked Coleeb. "Who are they to sit in judgement on how valuable or worthless your comings and goings are? They'd have a difficult case proving that they're better off than you. To have a family; not to have a family. To have a recognized career; not to have one. And soon. Well, what's the real difference? In one case, you do one set of things. In the other, you do another set of things. Either can be worthless, Either can be worthwhile. It all depends on what the given man makes of them. Or so it seems to me."

"That is very true," replied Costyve. "But -- " and then, having heard his own position so well defended, he began arguing the case of the settled people against himself, trying to show that they were more productive, more solid; that they had a function in life, that they fulfilled an obligation to society and constituted the backbone of the world ; whereas he was like a vagrant, useless appendage.

Costyve's feeling of inferiority to these settled people of whom he, Coleeb, was one, made Coleeb a bit uncomfortable. Not taking kindly to it, he interrupted Duditch's argument to ask:

"You like to travel, don't you?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Costyve, brightening. One could see that he truly did. And then he added: "It is a way of grooming one's person!" A significant smile lit his face.

"Well then," said Coleeb, "what do you care what people think of you? If the truth be told, half of them are envious of what, from their point of view, is your freedom. From a settled background they envy you as much as you, from a moving one, envy them. And those who don't envy you, are always glad to see you, and to know that you're in town. So from now on, I won't hear of any explanations or excuses for your not letting us know when you are coming. Do you understand me, my roving gentleman?"

Costyve said that he did, and felt too pleased to look chastened. Something about Coleeb warmed the cockles of his heart.

"By the way," asked Coleeb, "did you by any chance receive an invitation to Constance Hanover's tea this afternoon?"

"Yes, I did," replied Costyve. "I don't know how she knew. Nice of her, wasn't it? It gives one a warm feeling . . ."

"You don't deserve it," said Coleeb, shaking his head at him. "You just blow in, and blow out, and use cities much as we ordinary mortals use the rooms of our houses. Well, I won't take you to task any more this morning. But this afternoon . . ." and he levelled a finger at him. "I've an appointment at ten. And you seem to be off somewhere."

He put out his hand, grasped Costyve's, and said:

"About 4:30. Remember where her place is?"

Costyve nodded. "On Dearborn Street."

"You do remember your old town, don't you? Well, watch the traffic! I'll see you at 4:30. Solong!"

"Au revoir!" said Costyve, and waved his arm as he was accustomed to doing so often at train and ship departures.

And the two men parted to go their separate ways until tea time.

As Coleeb walked against the wind to his appointment, he turned over in his mind what a queer fellow this Costyve was. Reserving serious observations and reflections for another time, he recalled with amusement the various odd stories told on Costyve. In particular, he recalled gossip as to how Duditch liked to be remembered by bell-boys, how he liked to be singled out and hailed in a crowd.

It was told, for instance, that if he were scurrying along anonymous in the throngs of Fifth Avenue, New York, or the Boulevard des Capucines, Paris, and someone chanced to notice and recognize him, he was ready to repay this person with his life. The person need not stop and converse with him; he preferred that the person did not. It was enough that he was hailed. "Good morning," or, "How do you do, Mr Costyve Duditch!" He would smile brightly and feel a touch of self-importance. Ships greeting in the night... And Costyve, God bless him, would mount a crest and sail on.

It was further told that in pursuit of gratification for this strange trait, he had a way of going from city to city carefully selecting hotels with this wish in mind: that after due period of absence, the doormen, the clerks, the porters, and the bell and elevator boys would remember him, salute him by name, complain that they had not seen him for ages, and, in general, treat him as a visiting dignitary of great worth. His calculations were very shrewd. He never returned to a hotel a month after having stayed in it. For, considering the sized tips he gave everyone, it would have been no mark of remembrance for the entire staff to recall him after so short a lapse of time. No, he never returned to a place thus quickly. A year, two years, three years -- and if, after an interval of four years they still saluted him, it was one of the high moments of his life. Thus, since he travelled much, he knew almost every hotel in the world, was known by every Hotel Bristol on the Continent, and, unfortunately, sacrificed many a pleasant hour by the hearth-side in order to gratify this strange weakness.

Coleeb, picturing Duditch in the midst of these antics, did not fail to perceive the distorted wish for recognition which underlay them; and his sense of amusement was replaced by a feeling of pathos. He drew a deep breath, shook his head soberly; and then, having reached the Wrigley Building, entered it.

Costyve, feeling much set-up as a result of his encounter with Coleeb, sped along to fulfil his morning's plan. His day went off like clock-work.

He had a faculty for sleeping well. He slept soundly. Neither dreams nor conscience disturbed him. If he happened to hit the bed flat on his back -- that way he slept. If curled on his side, if round on his belly -- so he slept till early morning. No day came to find him other than refreshed and full of energy to get up.

Of mornings, his first trick was to thrust his toes from the sheets and twinkle them. Then, with a bright-eyed grin on his face, bouncing up, he would dash in and frisk under a cold shower. Shave. And then into street clothes.

He had many suits. Tweeds, and serges, and fabrics from all quarters of the earth. He also liked tailors to remember him. But whatever else he put on, these two items were indispensable and unchangeable: his spats, his grey spats, and a standing collar. They served to give him an air of distinction wherever he went, and he was strongly inclined to wear them in warm weather and in hot climates. And, also, to discerning eyes, they evoked the pathetic aura of a bachelor; perfectly dressed, but never in his life to possess either mistress, lover, or wife. Ah yes, 'twas said that Mr Costyve Duditch was a gelding.

However, in other respects, he stood in sufficient answer to those critics of America who say that we are a fatigued and enervated people. For instance, he was indefatigable, with spirits always up. True, now and again he had trouble with his kidneys; but, save for this trifling occasional ailment, he was in sound good health and had an enviable appetite. In fact, he could eat almost any kind of food and cooking with no concern for indigestion. Also, he was free to pick up and leave for remote corners of the earth with never a care about getting fixed up by doctors and dentists before he left. Nor did he require that there be such persons where he went. Central Africa, Tibet, Alaska, the South Seas -- it was all the same to him: no place held terror or discomfort. Hence he was free to enjoy the unique strangenesses and delights of each.

What would have happened to him had his spirits flagged; what would have been his outlook had he suddenly contracted gout, or severe rheumatism, or low blood pressure, or Bright's disease -- ah well, he seemed immune from virulent bacteria, organic and psychological -- let him be.

Now right after breakfast he always did something. Sometimes he had definite business to attend to. But whether he had or not, he invariably sallied forth regularly and promptly at 9:00 A. M., hailed a taxi, took a bus or a jinricksha, or bounced along the street, according to the place and mood, headed for the business district. No matter what part of the world he was in. For his purposes, Peking was just as good as Moscow, Moscow just as good as Paris, London, New York, or Chicago. All he wanted was to taste some kind of commercial atmosphere first thing in the morning. He had a need to feel in touch with the forms and rhythms of man's tangible necessities. Once in the midst of things, his fertile brain would not wait long before inventing something definite to do.

This morning, after leaving Coleeb, he steered towards the Loop, and paid a round of visits to men with whom he really had business connexions. He visited the offices of his real estate agent and of his stock broker. In both places he tarried just long enough to get a smell of the office atmosphere. His affairs, he found, were going quite well without his personal attention. So, after an exchange of greetings, and after receiving a number of tips which he promptly forgot, he quit his brokers and went to his bank to clip coupons. This done, his urgent business for the morning was finished. But there still remained an hour before lunch. To fill this, he conceived the notion of inspecting merchandise in various large department Stores. :

On entering Marshall Field's he should have found himself in a place of lofty ceilings, large white pillars, and, in general of rather grand proportions. But neither he nor any other of the buzzing throng of morning shoppers took notice of these proportions.

Women with eyes close to their noses pressed along the aisles and crowded about the counters, viewing and fingering stuffs of silk, cotton, leather, jewels...Costyve himself darted and ducked through the women, giving the impression that he was in urgent search of some special something which was nowhere to be found. However, as he passed the cut-glass counter, a particularly fine bowl caught his attention and caused him to pause. The longer he gazed at it the more it won his admiration. So, at length, he asked the saleswoman to let him examine it.

He took the bowl in rather nervous fingers and began turning it round, viewing its designs and rather exquisite workmanship. He came to like it so well that his mind began searching to find someone to whom he could send it as a gift. And just then, by God, the bowl slipped from his hands and crashed on the floor, sending glittering splinters in all directions. Costyve, in consternation, literally jumped in the air. The saleswoman made hysterical sounds and gestures. And several people, including the floor-walker, gathered. Duditch, flushed and flustered, jumpy all over, fumbled for his bill-case. He stuttered in asking the price of the bowl, apologized, and, finally, amid much hubbub, the greater part of which he himself created, settled the matter by having the bowl placed on his charge account. This done, and feeling that all the eyes in the world were on him, all fingers shaking at him reprovingly, he hastened to leave the store.

And then, outside, on Wabash Avenue, with the entire Loop crushing and crashing about him, he had a sharp feeling that he must also leave Chicago immediately. The city suddenly seemed to be in the same condition as the bowl. Always when he broke something, which he was continually doing -- either literally breaking something, or building up a scheme or a wish only to have it

collapse on him -- he felt like this: that he, the most clumsy person in the world, had shattered the finest things the world contained. And in this mood, he always headed towards a railroad station or a ship's pier. So now, he jumped into a taxi and was driven to the Santa Fe station, where he changed the time of his departure from 10:00 P. M. to 7:00 P. M. Had not Miss Hanover's tea prevented him, he would have left as soon as he could gather his bags.

For lunch, Costyve avoided his club, fearing he might run into friends who would ask him why he hadn't let them know that he was coming to town. The restaurant selected happened to be a dismal affair, depressing; and save that the food stimulated him, he would have sunk into melancholy worse than any he had known in years.

After lunch he bucked himself up and returned to his apartment, there to engage himself till 4:30.

This apartment, a four-room suite located in the section of Chicago near the Drake Hotel, he kept on lease year in and year out. Its rent had been raised several times; he had paid the increase cheerfully. It was the one place in the world to which he could turn with a feeling of having a settled habitat. It was the one place which gave him a sense of having anchorage. He did not want to dwell in it constantly. He had no sentimental regrets about leaving it. But there were comfort and cheer in the knowledge that, furnished with certain of the objects which he cherished, it was there, his own, for him to return to whenever he wished.

One room was his sleeping-room. Another he kept for a possible guest. A third was a sitting-room, containing a baby grand piano, several comfortable chairs, and an odd assortment of objects such as pottery, weapons, articles of dress and ornament, a tiger skin, a number of ancient-looking manuscripts -- things which, from time to time, he had brought home from various quarters of the earth. In addition to these, the room now was littered with Costyve's bags, suit-cases, coats, hats, and what not. It had a musty smell owing to its having been occupied so little.

The fourth room, a dark box-like affair which usually had to be lit by electricity, Costyve called his study. Here he kept, in glass-enclosed cases, his books. And here also he hid away in three different covers the notes which for years he had been making and which, some day, he hoped to work over and organize in three separate volumes. Already he had titles for these books of his.

One, dealing with travel as a factor in the shaping of a cultured person, was to be called: *The Influence of Travel on the Personality*. An alternate title for this book was: *How Travel Grooms the Person*.

A second book, descriptive of the love-affairs of great men, concerning which, if the book were ever published, Costyve would prove himself a specialist, was to be called: When Love was Great. He also thought of calling this book: Finesse in Love. He could not quite decide whether he wished to emphasize the bold strength of great men's loves, or the subtlety of management which they displayed.

And the third, treating the creative processes as they are manifested in life and art, was to be titled: There is No Life Without Creation.

Now if, first thing in the morning, Costyve visited the business district, the second thing he did, right after lunch, was to apply himself to his literary work. This also he did irrespective of what part of the world he was in.

So now, returning to his apartment, he cleansed himself of Chicago's dirt, put on a gorgeous silk and gold-embroidered mandarin's cloak which he used as a house robe, went into his study, switched on the lights, and began adding to his given collection the notes he had taken for the past year. There was so much assorting and arranging to be done that, for a while, his activity amounted to no more than librarian's work. In time, however, amid much fussing and fuming, and repeated runnings to the bath-room for water, he managed to penetrate beneath the surface of his material dealing with the influence of travel on the personality. Opinions and points which had come to his mind during the talk with Coleeb found their way into his notes.

After writing a page which moderately satisfied him -- and surprised him -- he glanced at his watch and was shocked to see that it was already 4:45. He jumped up, put his notes carefully away, hustled into his street clothes, and rushed to Miss Hanover's.

Constance Hanover was a woman of class and refinement, tall, with flowing lines and an easy grace of movement. A charming hostess, she managed all affairs, social and other, exceedingly well, exerting no apparent effort to do so.

To this tea, an informal affair given for no special person, she had invited in addition to Coleeb and Costyve a number of friends and acquaintances whom she wished to see and chat with. Had she known in time that Costyve was going to be in town, she most certainly would have given it for him especially. As it was, she had to so manipulate things that he would become a sort of unannounced lion of the occasion. This she aimed to do not only because she found Costyve interesting and amusing, but also because his pathetic side appealed very strongly to her and made her want

to help and advance him in any way she could.

The room in which she was going to pour tea showed taste in decoration, with an eye for ease and comfort. Its walls were done in soft-toned silver grey; and on its walnut floor there was a modern French rug in grey and rose. On either side of an open hearth, in which a wood fire was crackling, stood a wing- and an arm-chair. And across from the hearth, against the opposite wall, a lounge. On a low table everything was in readiness for pouring either tea or coffee. The china and silverware, of old-fashioned design, had been in her family for years. It was recognized by everyone that this room and Miss Hanover belonged together.

Around 4:30 her friends began coming. They drove up in town-cars, taxis -- and one or two walked. Two society women, stunningly dressed, and both interested also in the fine arts. A young painter who, in addition to his small canvases, was doing murals for hotels and having quite a success with them. A professor from the University. A critic of literature. A charming young poet who had just finished a long poem in the modern idiom and was undecided whether he ought to be proud or ashamed of it. An actress who was playing the leading part in a rather serious drama which several weeks before had come to Chicago from New York. A French diplomat and his wife. A timorous-looking woman, a friend of Miss Hanover's college days. She had been asked to pour tea. And Coleeb.

They were shown in by a manservant, and, after the usual greetings, they were told by Miss Hanover that Mr Costyve Duditch, just returned from Toledo, Spain, was in town and would be to tea. Without exception, those who already knew him were surprised, delighted, and even eager to see him. While the few others let it be seen how eager they too were. And thus it was that by the time he arrived he found a chatting gathering which was quite willing to lionize him.

Dressed for the afternoon, as if he were in London rather than in Chicago, Costyve made his tardy appearance, delighted and apologetic. His entrance was greeted by a round of murmurs and exclamations such as one would expect to hear on the return of a prodigal ; and he had hardly had time to meet the people who were strangers to him before on every side they were asking that he tell them of his latest travels. However, Miss Hanover saved him from breathless confusion by suggesting that he be allowed to have his first cup of tea in comfort, and that thereafter all who wished could ply him with questions to their heart's content.

The wing-chair near the hearth was vacated for him, and Costyve ensconced himself in it, looked very bright and pleased, comfy, sipped his tea, and incidentally took over the office of keeping the

fire burning. Ever so often he would lean over, stir the embers with a poker, and, with a quick jerky movement, throw on another piece of wood.

The minute his first cup was put aside, he was asked so many questions, he had difficulty keeping track of them. But, beaming all over -- feeling secure and released by the fact that travel, and not he personally, was the subject of discussion -- he grew very talkative, now and again threw wood on the fire, and answered, contrived to answer most of them.

He told them about places, things, and cities in all quarters of the world: in England, Scotland, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Turkey, Persia, India, and China. The roads, the hotels, the food, the language, the kind of money, in each. It is to his credit that he succeeded in adding to the mere information he gave, some of his ideas as to the value of travel as an aid, an indispensable aid, in grooming the person. Fortunately, everyone took kindly to these notions ; and thus they let him feel that he had a place and function in the world. Indeed they gave him such a sense of wholeness that both the cut-glass bowl and the entire city of Chicago were temporarily mended: he began to regret that he was leaving so soon. Here in this company, in his own town, the purpose and end of his wanderings seemed about to receive not only recognition but fulfilment.

But it was not until he began telling of Toledo and the El Grecos that he really swung into his stride. In describing the city, in pointing out how one never caught the true spirit and meaning of El Greco's genius until one had seen his art in the midst of the very conditions, physical and spiritual, which had given it birth and form, he was able to expand, and, by the use of major examples, to demonstrate that a truly cultured personality could never be formed unless one did travel widely and thus tap the currents of civilization at their sources.

The young painter particularly was interested in what Costyve had to say about El] Greco. And so, in a way, was Coleeb. For he, Coleeb, with a good friend of his, had once spent an interesting hour before the El] Grecos in the museum in Boston. Mentioning this to Costyve, and asking him if he had ever seen them, Coleeb was not surprised to learn that Duditch was familiar with them and with most things in Boston also.

While Costyve talked on, Coleeb lapsed into silence, slouched in his corner of the lounge, squinted, and began attentively to observe Duditch's behaviour.

The first thing he noticed was that Costyve's tone of voice had little or no relation to, no connexion with, the various subjects he talked about. Whatever the subject, whether it were the price of

a railroad ticket across Siberia, or a Hindu temple; whatever the theme, whether it were gossip about people or serious discussion of art and life, his tone contained an odd pathetic pleading apologetic persuasive quality mingled with a note which suggested that he was delighted with something, perhaps with life, and as pleased with himself as he dared be. This tone of voice appeared to go on by itself, yes, expressing some reality, maybe expressing the fundamental tone of Costyve's temperament; but it rarely if ever changed to suit the various topics of conversation. And so, on first hearing, it seemed to be strangely unrelated not only to the subjects, but to Costyve himself. It gave the impression of being disembodied. A voice, sounding on the face of the earth, pleading and delighted, pleading for no one, delighted with no tangible thing.

Queerly impressed by this observation, Coleeb then turned to note what he could of Costyve's mental behaviour. It was not long before he saw that here too, as in his bodily movements, Duditch appeared to be continually coming and going. His face alternated between three distinct expressions. One, a bright-eyed, eager, fertile expression. By this you could know, some seconds before its arrival, that an idea was coming to him. Then, once the idea had come and had been vocalized, sometimes with an odd confusion of words, sometimes with a surprising aptness and clarity, you could tell that it was going by the vacant look which swiftly descended on him. And, third, when quite gone, you would know this by the curious silent anticipatory way he would stare at you -- an expression suggesting that though his own mind which only a minute before had been full was now blank, he expected either himself or you to say something of importance immediately.

To these noticed traits, Coleeb added what he knew of Costyve's emotional life: the fact that Duditch was continually building houses of cards only to have them collapse on him, the fact that his growing emotional interests were marked by outbursts of enthusiasm and by an ever increasing fever of activity, and that his waning interest was characterized by a sort of pathetic disillusion and by a semi-frustrated eagerness to find some new attachment to take its place -- Coleeb added these known facts to his current perceptions and thus obtained a fairly complete outline of how Costyve acted,

Meanwhile, Costyve himself, still the centre of the company, had left Toledo and El Greco in favour of a seldom visited island off the coast of Greece. And it was at this point that the timorous-looking woman, Miss Hanover's college friend, asked him a question which allowed Costyve to reveal himself in a new light. In fact, in answering it he not only showed forth an aspect of himself unknown even to his close friends, but said something which caused the abrupt termination of the tea.

"But, Mr Duditch," he was asked by a quivering feminine voice,

"suppose you were to die in some far-off outlandish place. What ever would happen to your body?"

This fearful mention of death threw a vaguely nervous cloud over the gathering and disturbed most of the guests with the exception of Costyve. He, on the contrary, appeared quite at ease, as if he were fully prepared to face what for others was an alarming aspect of reality. Looking in a matter-of-fact way at his timid questioner, he replied:

"It would be disposed of according to the custom of the place."

"Not even sent home?" she asked, visibly withdrawing from the opposite possibility. All were concerned to hear his answer.

"Home?" he asked. "Do you mean by home, here, Chicago?"

"Yes," she said, trembling. 'To your relatives and friends here."

"But my dear lady," Costyve replied. "To a man who has made the world his home -- tut, tut -- I have not forgotten Chicago -- but, beneath the pavement it is all earth, is it not? It is earth here, in New York, in Constantinople, in Mecca, in Bombay, or in some spot without name. Would not the same changes occur in my dead organism whatever the place? For sure, they would. So you see. [have no doubt but what some fine morning a strange person using a foreign tongue will enter my room, cast one frightened glance at my body lying there, and say, 'He's dead'."

Having said this, with more dramatic impressiveness than was his wont, Costyve paused; and the idea of death was about to leave him. But it remained with the others so vividly that each one identified with the picture which Duditch had conjured, and saw himself or herself dead stretched out in a strange room. Even their own usually familiar rooms would be strange if they were dead in them. They felt this with a quick catch of breath.

"Mr Duditch!" several exclaimed, and looked at him to say that he had mentioned an impolite and terrifying thing.

It was Costyve's turn to look surprised and dismayed. He could not imagine what he had done to deserve this sudden reversal.

"He's dead" rang ominously in their ears. The longer they heard it the more aghast they became. The image struck deeper and deeper into them.

"T'm dead," an impossible thing which some invisible force made them grapple with and realize to be true. Shock on their faces, each

one tried to view himself and did look at the others. True, every single person there would have it said about him, sooner or later: "He's dead," or "She's dead."

Being not at all like the ancient Egyptians who used to have mummies brought into their feasts, the present gathering took strenuous exception to such ideas and feelings at an afternoon tea.

Abruptly, one after the other, they arose to tell Miss Hanover how nice her tea had been, gingerly shake Costyve's trembling hand, and leave. In no time at all, Coleeb, Costyve, and of course Miss Hanover were the sole ones remaining. Poor Duditch knew he had broken something, but could not tell what. He was tense, fidgety, and miserable, and made the situation awkward for the other two.

Coleeb regarded him, trying to determine whether his expressed attitude towards death were merely due to lack of imagination or to a well considered unwillingness to place more value on his body than its worth. If this latter, then it was a sign of more intelligence and sense of reality than he was usually credited with. Coleeb could not decide which.

Miss Hanover tried to smoothe the thing over; but in doing so she somehow gave Costyve the impression that beneath her kind words she really saw how ridiculous and helpless he was, and pitied him. This made him feel worse than if she had put him out of her house and slammed the door on him. He could not bear to have any one pity him. He made several futile gestures in denial of what he took to be her inner attitude; and then, before either she or Coleeb knew what was happening, Costyve darted towards the hall, left his hat behind, and rushed out the door into the street.

Flying down the avenue, his world smashed to bits about him, he was aware of no wish save to see no human being on earth, of no need save to leave Chicago as fast as a train could carry him.

He never could remember how he reached his apartment, got his things together, and arrived at the station.

Once there, he called to his service a staff of porters and had them shoulder more bags, suit-cases, and odds and ends than the law allows, himself, like a little general, at the head of them. Several bystanders laughed at the sight of him. But to an observing eye Costyve's departure was a matter of pathos no less than of comicality. For, rushing and active with fuss and to-do, surrounded by things and people though he was, his spirit hugged itself in loneliness and felt goaded by a thousand shattered hopes.

Ah well, it was a matter for this night only. For, on awaking in

the morning to find himself speeding over some southwest section of the American wilderness, he would bounce from berth, bowl up the aisle, and out-beam all the men in the shaving-room.

A SONG TO CALIFORNIA

BY CARL JOHN BOSTELMANN

Hear me!

I have had alkali on my boots;

O hear my song --

I who have had poppies on my eyes,
California.

I have wandered

About your brown hills and your blue mountains,
Down into your ripe green valleys

And along your infinite roads!

Dias dorados!

Your golden days I have utilized

In my vagrant wandering, pursuing your music
As a child, meandering casually,

Pursues romance in a museum.

O thunder and stars!

I have lain through many a long night
By a waterhole, listening. I have heard
The rhythmic drums of marching cattle
In your hills under the moon.

I have stood hip-deep in your cotton,
And shoulder-high your alfalfa has grown

About me in the San Joaquin Valley.

I have harvested sugar prunes

In the Santa Clara orchards,

Stricken with their beauty

Even as Hercules must have been

When he plucked the Hesperian apples!

I have sewed sacks on a harvester when your grain
Was a flood of gold in the shutes.

On the roads with a shovel and pick,

On the canals with a sickle and pike,

On the ranches, I have sweat and strained

To become part of you!

Gold -- gold -- gold! Everywhere, gold!
El dorado!

On your rivers, at the weirs and the dams,

I have witnessed the salmon, leaping the ladders,
Daring the gauntlet of spears,

In water knee-deep, to win to the headwaters
To spawn. I have seen the water silver

With their pilgrimage, a pageant of glory!

I have run like the wind across your plain,

Chasing the tumbleweed, shouting whoops,

Wild with vigour, crazy with fever!

I have bathed in the surges that wash upon your beaches.
I have drowsed in the sun, under the blue sky,

On the white sand.

Your palms have spread their shade for me,

Your redwoods, your pines, your spruce,

Your aspens, your eucalyptus, your cottonwoods!
You have flavoured the air I breathed, with them
And with the orange-blossoms, the cherry-blossoms,
The prune-blossoms, the apple-blossoms,

Of your orchard gardens!

You knew me then, California!

I have discovered your lakes,

Fragments of sky in the vales of your mountains,
Fringed with the margins of forests,

Sapphire blue at noon

As your heavens!

I have heard the rumble of fountains,
Plumed gushers of oil, speaking your might
With a roar like your rivers'!

I have danced to a chorus of turbines
Humming a new music,

Chanting new songs of Sierra!

Mistress of the West,

You would sift more alkali on my old boots!

You would place fresh poppies on my eyes!

You would give me your brown hills and your blue mountains,
Your ripe green valleys and your infinite roads!

Dias dorados!

O dream of golden days!
No mortal can ask more than you have given, California.
You have given me yourself, California!

THE MUSIC OF THE DEGENERATE

BY MAXIM GORKI

[wherein Gorki reveals himself as a typical uptight, racist, Russian Orthodox homophobic, or closet-case. Personally, I find this essay offensive, but I'm including it anyway, because I hate censorship. -- Editor, MPDMedia]

Translated From the Russian by Marie Budberg

IT is night.

Yet -- it seems somewhat unsuitable -- the word night -- confronted by this wonderful sky of Southern Italy, this atmosphere impregnated with blue light and with the aromatic warmth of a kindly soil. The light seems to pour not from the sun, reflected by the golden rays of the moon, but from that indefatigably prolific soil, laboriously, masterfully tilled by human hands. The silver-tinted olive-leaves, the stony foundations of the mountains breathe noiseless light; these walls protect from landslips, defining on the rocks, vast plains sown with corn, planted with beans, potatoes, and cabbage -- laid out with vines, and orange and lemon groves. How much wise, tenacious labour has been lavished here! -- The orange and yellow fruit also shines through the transparent, silvery mist, adding to the earth a queer likeness to the sky blossoming with stars. One is led to think that the earth has been carefully ornamented by its labourers for a great feast and that after resting to-night, to-morrow, at sunset, they will rejoice and make merry.

The silence is immutable. Everything on earth is so still, it would seem to have been chiselled by the hand of a great artist, cast in bronze and blue silver. The perfection of peace and beauty inspires one with solemn thoughts of the inexhaustible power of human labour, labour that creates all the miracles of our world; communicates to one the certitude that with time this triumphant force will compel even the soil of the extreme North to work for man twelve months of the year, will break it in, as it does animals. Joyfully and as the French say, reverently one meditates upon man, the miracle-worker, upon the splendid future which he is preparing for his sons.

Memory evokes the figures and faces of workers in the field of science: Professor Vaviloff, strolling about Abyssinia, seeking the

dissemination centres of nourishing graminaceous plants with a view to spreading in his country such of them as do not fear drought; one recalls D. Prianishnikov's story of beds of acid of potassium at the source of the Kama; all the men whom one has come to know rise before one: the great man J. Pavloff, Rutherford in his laboratory in Montreal in 1906; dozens of Russians, founders of science, stand forth in memory and, bringing back all one has read, contribute to the concept of the wonderfully prolific, ever increasingly active work of the world's scientists. We live in an epoch when the distance from the maddest vagaries to the most matter-of-fact realities is being diminished with incredible speed.

Recently one of our territorial investigators, Andrej Bokharefft from Kozloff reminded me in a letter, of two such miracle-workers, Luther Burbank, the American "self-made man," and our man of genius, Ivan Michurin. I take the liberty of publishing an extract from his letter, hoping that Bokhareff could have no objection. The Letter:

"Luther Burbank discovered, as is known, a number of mysteries in the domain of intersective miscegenation of fruit-bearing plants, and managed to produce species of plants not only marvellous but monstrous in their luxuriance, adaptability, taste, immunity to illnesses and plant enemies, thus enriching the entire continent of America. To mention his eatable, thornless cactuses and the nuts, the stone-hard shells of which he transformed into a membrane thin as a leaf, suffices to suggest the picture of this giant of fructification.

There is in the Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics -- in the district of Tambov, on the meagre soil of eternal snow-drifts, hemmed in by the foliage of wild willows, poplars, and maples, the smaller in proportion, but even more marvellous truck-garden of the hybridizer, Ivan Michurin.

Luther Burbank worked for subtropic California with its favourable climate; Michurin, for the stern climate of Central Russia.

Luther Burbank produced many new species of fruit-bearing plants intended for the consumption of the rich. Michurin has produced more than a hundred species of fruit-bearing trees, among which are pears that ripen just before Christmas (in cellars and cases) and are preservable in prime condition until April. This alone means riches to the workers. Then in the stern atmosphere of Tambov, Michurin has managed to grow luxuriant apricot-trees, grapes (four kinds), almond-trees, nuts, mulberry-trees, rice, quinces, et cetera -- all for the workers, for our country, for the inexperienced peasant-orchard-grower with his limited knowledge.

Luther Burbank carefully tended his nurslings. Michurin bred

his in Spartan conditions, that the species might withstand any environment and produce the necessary economic result. When he started his work, Luther Burbank was poor, but after his scientific successes, he revelled in the luxuriousness of American culture, Owing to the sad condition of Russian life formerly, Michurin existed in poverty close to misery. During his long life of struggle, of anxieties, failures and disappointments, defeats and victories, he attained results that will enrich not only Central Russia, but the whole temperate zone. In a word Michurin transplants the south to the north.

Luther Burbank and Ivan Michurin symbolize the opposite poles of gardening, but in their general aspect are very much alike. Both began their work in early youth, both were poor, both became great philosophers, artists, and creators. Both made great discoveries in the domain of plant-growing. To Michurin's lot has fallen the great discovery of adaptation in methods of fruit-growing, by the aid of which man will probably in the immediate future produce not only new types, but also new species of fruit-bearing plants, more fully corresponding to the demands of life and better adapted to the inevitable changes in climatic conditions. Michurin's work was known in America as much as eighteen years before the war, his types being widely cultivated there; and the well-known botanist of the Washington Agricultural Institute, Professor Meyer, visited him at his home throughout a period of years. In 1924 Michurin's work received wide recognition in Germany. He is honorary member of the Naturalists' Association of the Commissariat for Public Instruction, et cetera, et cetera. Michurin is a veteran. He is seventy-two, but still goes on creating, drawing away one by one, the veils which conceal the mysteries of plants."

The stillness of this night, permitting the mind to rest from the various if paltry grievances of the day's work, seems to whisper to the soul a solemn music of the universal labour of great and small, a magnificent song of a new history -- a song boldly raised by the working people of my country.

Then, all of a sudden, in the sensitive stillness resounds the dry knocking of an idiotic hammer -- one, two, three, ten, twenty strokes and after them -- as a splash of mud in clear transparent water, there come with a crash, a wild whistle, screeches, rumbling, wailing, howling, the snorting of a metal pig, the cry of a donkey, the amorous quacking of a monstrous frog. All this insulting chaos of mad sounds is submitted to an imperceptible rhythm and after listening for one, two minutes to those wails, one begins unwillingly to imagine that this is an orchestra of maniacs, stricken with sexual mania and directed by a man-stallion who brandishes a huge genetic member.

That is the radio -- one of the greatest discoveries of science, one of the mysteries wrested by it from nature, hypocritically silent. It is the radio in a neighbouring hotel, bringing consolation to a world grown gross, the world of birds of prey -- transporting to them on air the tune of a new fox-trot executed by a negro-orchestra. It is the music of grossness. To its rhythm in all the magnificent "cabarets" of a cultured continent the degenerate, with cynical fluctuations of the hips, pollute, simulate, the fecundation of woman by man.

From time immemorial the poets of all nations, all epochs, have lavished their creative power in ennobling this act, adorning it, making it worthy of man that in this he should not be on a plane with the goat, bull, or boar. Hundreds, thousands of beautiful poems have been composed in praise of love -- an emotion which has ever been potent in stimulating the creative powers of men and women. Through the force of love man has become a being far more social than the cleverest of animals. Poetry expressing a matter-of-fact, healthy, active romanticism in sex relationship has had great educative and social importance for humanity.

Love and hunger govern the world, said Schiller. Love, as the basis of culture, hunger as that of civilization. Then came an over-grown vampire, a parasite living on the labour of others, a semi-man with the motto: "After me the deluge," and with his thick feet he tramples all that has been created by the finest nervous tissue of great artists, the illuminators of the working classes.

He, the gross, does not need woman as a friend and human being; she is for him a mere tool of pleasure, unless she is as much a bird of prey as he is himself. As a mother she is of no use to him, for although he is fond of power, children are an impediment to him. Power, too, seems necessary to him only for fox-trotting and the latter has become a necessity because a man grown porcine is already a poor male. Love for him is -- depravity, and Not, as it was, mere appetite. In the world of the gross, homosexual love acquires an epidemic character. The evolution of grossness is -- degeneration.

It is the evolution from the charm of a minuet and the passion of a waltz, to the cynicism of a fox-trot with the convulsions of the Charleston; from Mozart and Beethoven to the jazz of the negroes who undoubtedly laugh in their sleeves seeing how their white masters evolve towards a savagery which the negroes of America are leaving behind them more and more rapidly. "Culture is declining," cry those who would like to see prevail over the working-man, the prestige of grossness. The proletariat threatens to do away with culture! Its constituents cry and lie, for they cannot remain blind to the fact that it is the universal herd of the bestial which is trampling culture; they cannot fail to understand

that the proletariat is the only force capable of saving culture, of fathoming and widening it.

The monstrous bass throws out English words; a wild horn wails piercingly, reminding one of the cries of a raving camel; a drum drones; a nasty little pipe sizzles, tearing at one's ears; the saxophone emits its quacking nasal sound. Swaying, fleshly hips, thousands of heavy feet, tread and shuffle.

The music of the degenerate ends finally with a deafening thud, as though a case of pottery had been flung from the skies to the earth. Again limpid stillness reigns around me and my thoughts return home; the peasant Vassily Kucheriavenko writes to me from there: "Before, in our village we used to have one school for three hundred houses; now we have three, a co-operative society, three red 'corners,' a club, a library, a reading-room, various groups; we have a wall-newspaper, we subscribe to countless reviews, papers, books. In the evenings -- from white-haired old men to red pioneers -- the clubs are crammed with all kinds of people. Lately an old woman of seventy-two died; before her death she used to say she would have loved to join the union of young communists had she not been so old. Why had it all begun so late, she said! She begged to be buried in the Soviet manner, with the flag. She went to all the meetings, walking many versts, and was like a girl. -- Recently in an American review, Asia, there was an article about all this, with photographs."

She is a curious person, that old grandmother. Of course: "One grandam will not make culture," as the proverb says, but how many do I know of such, let us say, amusing cases of rejuvenation of the ancient peasant, all pointing to one conclusion: the Russian nation is growing young.

How fine it is to be working and living in our time!



Colum, by Yeats 1900's

PROLOGUE TO BALLOON: A COMEDY BY PADRAIC COLUM

A Square in Megalapolis. It is towards night-fall. Back, right, is a towering Hotel. Right is a large brass Telescope on stand. The owner of the Telescope is standing by it. He is thoughtful-looking, detached; between thirty-five and forty.

A group of four newspaper men enter left.

TELESCOPE OWNER: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

FIRST REPORTER (evidently in training): Say, wouldn't that be a good headline?

SECOND REPORTER: I didn't get it.

FIRST REPORTER: "Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas." It would look pretty on a page -- what?

THIRD REPORTER (ponderously instructive): Descriptive -- yes. But only descriptive. Remember that you should always get a verb into the headline. "Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas !" -- it lacks something. Now what does it lack? A verb. "Extinct Volcanoes threaten Empty Seas." That means something.

FIRST REPORTER: Sure. I get you.

THIRD REPORTER (sfi/l ponderous): The verb -- it's the king-pin in

the headline.

FIRST REPORTER: Who is he anyway? The Professor?

SECOND REPORTER: Caspar is his name. He lets you look at the Moon through the Telescope. A silver's the charge. He's been round here quite a while.

FIRST REPORTER: What about getting a story from him?

THIRD REPORTER: What kind of a story do you mean?

FIRST REPORTER: "Obscure Telescope-operator tells of his Vigils."

SECOND REPORTER: Forget it. The day for that sort of thing is gone by.

FOURTH REPORTER: I'm doing Enquiring Reporter to-night. He's good for my question.

(The Reporters talk together. A string of people, men and old women, come from back.)

casPAR (addressing these people): Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

(They halt near him.)

SECOND REPORTER: They're scrub-women and downstairs-workers out of the Hotel.

FIRST REPORTER : Out of the Hotel Daedalus?

SECOND REPORTER: That's where they come from.

casPAR: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas! Here you are! For one silver you can see the enormous mountains. You can see the volcanoes with craters that are absolutely stupendous -- miles and miles across. And then the seas! Absolutely empty. No atmosphere, you see. No more remarkable spectacle can be offered.

scrUB-wOMAN: Is this a good time to look through it, Mister?

casPAR: It is a very good time. The atmosphere is clear. No clouds, as you can see.

scrUB-WOMAN: I often thought I'd look through it. What will I see, Mister?

CASPAR: The Mountains, the Seas, the Volcanoes of the Moon.

(He adjusts the Telescope for her. The Scrub-woman looks through. The other men and women watch her making the observation.)

SECOND REPORTER: Get your question answered and then we'll beat it.

ONE OF THE OTHER HOTEL HELP: (fo Caspar): Couldn't you do something for the workers, Brother?

casPaAR: 1? How could I?

ONE OF THE HELP: Hand them out something -- a few words or a leaflet.

casPpar: What would I do that for?

ONE OF THE HELP: Just to promote the cause. I don't ask you to hand out anything to the rich irresponsibles. But any of the workers that come to you. . .

casPaR: I'm not a worker. I have only my Telescope.

ONE OF THE HELP: So that's the kind you are. Won't do anything for us? I see exactly the kind you are.

THE SCRUB-wWOMAN (having finished her observation): Yl look to-morrow again, sir. It did me good to see what you told me about.

casPar: Mountans, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

ONE OF THE HELP: I'll say it should be suppressed. All this science of astronomy is just to make people look away from the world. It's no wonder it's being subsidized by the rich irresponsibles. The whole thing will have to be swept away. Remember what I've told you -- you'll be swept away.

casPaR: Listen. I'm not interfering with anything.

ONE OF THE HELP: You're a reactionary -- that's all that's to that.

FOURTH REPORTER: I'll get two to answer my question here -- Telescope-operator and Scrub-woman.

(The Reporters cross to the people around the Telescope.)

FOURTH REPORTER (fo Scrub-woman): 1 represent the Midnight

Gazette.

MEN AND WOMEN: Midnight Gazette!

FOURTH REPORTER: I've to get four people to answer a question for me. I'll put it to two of you people here.

A MAN: Will it be in your paper that you asked one of us?

FOURTH REPORTER: It will be in after midnight. (To Scrub-woman.) I'll ask you to answer first.

SCRUB-WOMAN (intently): Yes, Mister.

FOURTH REPORTER: What do you think of the freedom of the City being given to Cohen Muldoon, the Prize-fighter?

ANOTHER SCRUB-WOMAN: Say, his suite is on the corridor that I work along.

A MAN: She has been telling us that all day.

woman: It is on the corridor I work along.

FOURTH REPORTER: Have you ever seen Cohen Muldoon, the Prize-fighter ?

woman: No, Mister. I've never seen him.

FOURTH REPORTER (fo first Scrub-woman) : Well, that's the question.

FIRST SCRUB-WOMAN: Does he get that suite free?

THIRD REPORTER (ponderously) : It doesn't mean that he gets anything free. It's only an honour. But should a prize-fighter get an honour like that from the city -- that's the question.

A MAN (prompting the Scrub-woman): It's like electing him to something.

SCRUB-WOMAN (thoughtfully): I'd say it was all right.

FOURTH REPORTER: I'll put down what you've said. Scrub-woman in Hotel Daedalus says that public does well in honouring prize-fighter, he, in several ways, representing populace or at least popular feelings.

SCRUB-WOMAN (gratified): Yes, Mister. Will I see that in the

paper?

FOURTH REPORTER: Yes. Midnight Gazette. Any time after midnight.

casPAR (Stepping out of the group): You print questions in your paper, don't you?

REPORTER: Yes, we do.

casPaR: I'd like you to print a question that I have in my mind.

(Reporter gets ready to write.)

caspaR: Is a man born a hero, or does he become a hero by doing heroic things?

FOURTH REPORTER: I don't get that.

casPAR: In other words -- what is it to be a hero?

FOURTH REPORTER: I still don't get your question.

casPAR: It's like this: Take the case of the man they have given the freedom of the city to -- Cohen Muldoon. Take him as an example of what I mean. He didn't fight because he's a fighter -- he's a fighter because he has fought.

FOURTH REPORTER: And what do you want to ask?

casPaR: What is it to be a hero? Is a man born a hero -- or anything remarkable? Or does he become a hero -- or anything remarkable -- by doing heroic or remarkable things? Take my case...

SECOND REPORTER: Oh, he's getting ready to talk about himself.

FIRST REPORTER: There may be a story in it. "Obscure telescope-operator tells of unnoted bravery!" How would that do for a headline? Say, Mister .. .

CasPaR: Yes...

FIRST REPORTER: What about it?

casPpar: What about what?

FIRST REPORTER: Your unnoted bravery. Ever stopped a hold-up hereabouts ?

casPar: No . . . I can't say that I have.

FIRST REPORTER: Well, what deed of bravery were you talking about then?

casPaR: I wasn't talking about deeds of bravery I have done, Listen! It's like this . . .

SECOND REPORTER: Can you give us anything on Cohen Muldoon?

casPaR: No. I mean I don't know him. Take him as an example of what I mean...

THIRD REPORTER: No. There's nothing in it. You couldn't put it over.

casPaR: What I mean is that one can't do anything if the opportunity isn't offered. The bravest and most resolute man might stand on this pavement for years, and if nothing happened here, why he could do nothing to show his courage and resolution. But if something did happen he could do something. And this is what I mean: By just doing it he would become something. A man becomes a hero by doing heroic things. A man becomes remarkable by doing remarkable things.

FOURTH REPORTER: Your picture wouldn't look much.

SECOND REPORTER: Your name wouldn't look anything in a headline.

FIRST REPORTER: Obscure Telescope-owner, we won't have you on the first page in the morning.

CASPAR: You're not going to print my question, then?

FOURTH REPORTER: No. It would only mix people up.

(Reporters go off. Hotel Help go off in other direction.)

SCRUB-WOMAN: It did me good to look through the Telescope and see the mountains and all you told me about. I was nearly forgetting about the sore thumb I have while I was thinking about what I saw. I'll come and look to-morrow.

casPAR: I'll be here.

SCRUB-WOMAN : Good-night.

casPaR: Good-night, good-night.

(The Scrub-woman goes off with the others.)

casPAR (alone): Will I never see my name on the front pages?
"Caspar in first plane over South Pole." "Caspar stands on bottom of the Sargasso Sea." Another night! And will this night, too, go by without any opportunity coming to me?

(Redvyn the architect of the Hotel Daedalus and Miss Leila Romerantz, the Motion-picture actress, enter. Redvyn is still young but looks a man who has great achievements back of him. Miss Romerantz is young and supremely beautiful.)

nepvYN: I say it's only a stunt -- a publicity stunt. And why do you want to do it? To have the front page of the newspaper in the morning. But you are not the sort of a Cinema-star that needs that -- you're one of the great artists of the films. And, besides, you have more publicity than Napoleon and Balzac together ever had. There are thousands and thousands of representations of you in all places all over the world. I have seen them in villages that are in forests and up rivers and on the edge of deserts. Even the philosophers write about you. One said the other day ...

ROMERANTZ: What did he say? I may have missed it.

REDVYN : He said that he didn't care if all the pictures that represent womanhood in all the galleries of the world were destroyed if your picture on the screen remained. He talked of your rendering the grace and pride and integrity of youth. And you want to go up in a Balloon to-night!

ROMERANTZ: And I want you to accompany me, Redvyn.

rEDVYN: In a Balloon? And drop down by parachute?

ROMERANTZ: You have done more dangerous things than that.

rEDvYN : I don't see any danger in it. I'm not going with you this time.

ROMERANTZ: Oh, why not, Redvyn? Don't you like the building I am going up from?

REDVYN: As a matter of fact, I don't, Leila.

ROMERANTZ: Don't what, Redvyn?

rEDvyYN : I don't like the Hotel Daedalus, as a matter of fact.

ROMERANTZ: But you built the Hotel Daedalus! It's your great-

est achievement, Redvyn.

REDVYN: All right. Look at it! And look at the buildings around that are precisely like it. Look at them, I say!

ROMERANTZ: What are you going to tell me about them, O great architect ?

REDVYN : Look at them! Can any one be happy in them? Oh, of course, people can dance in the Hotel Daedalus, and have music in the Hotel Daedalus, and have excitement of every kind in the Hotel Daedalus. But can any one be happy in it? Or in any of the buildings around?

ROMERANTZ: I should have thought so -- yes.

REDVYN: You wouldn't know, Leila. For, after all, you, too, are one of the Children of Daedalus.

ROMERANTZ: One of the Children of Daedalus! I don't understand you, Redvyn. Who was Daedalus that your Hotel was named for? Tell me! I love to hear you tell things.

REDVYN: He is in Greek Mythology.

ROMERANTZ: I thought so. But place him for me.

REDVYN : He built the palaces for the Kings of Crete. He invented wings for people to fly with. He is the father of all who build great structures and compound the elements, and make plans for the subjugation of the earth.

ROMERANTZ: And the Children of Daedalus?

REDVYN: They are very different from the men and women who had places in the world, and who had memories of places and of other times, and who could be happy in their memories. The Children of Daedalus have nothing they would remember.

ROMERANTZ: And am I one of the Children of Daedalus, Redvyn?

REDVYN: Essentially you are one of the Children of Daedalus, Leila.

ROMERANTZ: And you, Redvyn?

REDVYN: I have built for them, but perhaps I am not really of them.

ROMERANTZ: Ah, but this does not explain at all why you are not

making the ascent with me.

REDvYN: Well, I am going to check every impulse in me to go with the Children of Daedalus.

ROMERANTZ: And I, Redvyn? How am I going to fit into this new scheme of life of yours?

REDVYN : Let us go away.

ROMERANTZ: Away where, Redvyn?

REDVYN: To some straggling village -- to some place utterly remote from all this. (He makes a gesture indicating the skyscrapers.)

casPaR (beside his telescope): Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

ROMERANTZ: And what would we do?

rEDvYN: Live! Live! Grow to be wise, grow to be joyful!

ROMERANTZ: It is very strange you should talk like this, Redvyn. As for growing wise -- isn't the great Library over there?

pepvYN: Yes. The great Library is just where we're looking.

ROMERANTZ: And as for being joyful -- I'm joyful when I swim in the mornings in the pool in the Hotel Daedalus. Everything is in your Hotel Daedalus, Redvyn.

rEDvVYN: Everything, I suppose, that the Children of Daedalus want. You won't go away from this?

ROMERANTZ: Oh, I'd love to.

rEDvYN: No, you wouldn't. You belong to this place. I know it.

ROMERANTZ: I have to go to the studios to-morrow. There's a great picture coming on. I'm the central character in it, but I'm directing it, too. Can't you see that I am building, too? I am doing something that's making woman ready to enter the civilization that the great engineers and builders, and men like you, Redvyn, are making ready for the human race.

casPaR: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

ROMERANTZ: I know what it is, Redvyn.

REDVYN: You know what what is, Leila?

ROMERANTZ: I know what's affecting you -- it's a complex!

rEDVYN: A complex -- nothing.

ROMERANTZ: A complex that makes you hate what you have been doing. I don't know what the complex is called, but I know there's such a one. There's such a good psychoanalyst has an office in the Hotel Daedalus.

REDVYN: In the Hotel Daedalus?

ROMERANTZ: Everything is in your Hotel Daedalus.

REDVYN : Everything is in the Hotel Daedalus -- everything I don't want -- everything I don't want to hear about. I'll not go into it.

ROMERANTZ: Oh, but you must.

REDvYN: I won't. I'll stand here and look at these buildings and try and find out if human beings can have any happiness in them.

ROMERANTZ: Come in later. There's plenty of time. If you won't make the ascent with me, Redvyn, I'll make it alone. I won't have any one elise go with me.

REDvyw: All right, Leila. I'll stay here. Perhaps I'll be here to see you come down.

ROMERANTZ: Oh, no. Come into the Hotel before I go up. Good. night, Redvyn. You'll see me later.
(Miss Romerantz goes towards Hotel.)

casPaR: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

REDVYN (furning to him): What did you say?

casPAR: Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas! On the Moon, sir!

REDvYN: What you said chimed in with something I was thinking of. Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas! (He looks round as if expecting to see them in Megalapolis.)

casPaR: Would you like to look through the Telescope? A silver! That is all, sir. (He takes the money Redvyn gives him.)

REDVYN (looking through Telescope): How dreadfully near they

are -- these Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, and Empty Seas!

casPar: Not many people think of them as being near, sir.

REDVYN: You, I imagine, have quite a good time here.

casPaR: In what way, sir?

REDVYN: You have no distractions, and you have an impressive offering for people.

casPaR: I have something to look at.

REDvYN: Yes. Very impressive.

casPaR: I mean the Hotel there.

REDVYN: The Hotel? The Hotel Daedalus, do you mean?

caspar: Yes. That great Hotel. (They both turn and look at it.)

REDVYN: You watch the people going in, I suppose?

CASPAR: It is not that so much...Look there!

REDvYN: The Elevator shaft?

casPar: The Elevator is rising. Look! Up, up, and up, it goes! Who are in the car, do you suppose? Women with soft-furred wraps around them, their faces delicately rouged . . .

REDvYN: Yes. They are in it.

casPpar: A renowned opera-singer. A diplomat. A famous general. A young girl with pearls around her throat and at her breast a bunch of white violets.

REDvYN: Ah, yes. Quite so.

CASPAR: Oh, sir, the whole of the world is in the Hotel Daedalus! I watch it, sir, that world! The Elevator stops. Someone gets off to go into a salon where brilliant lustres hang from the ceiling ...

pepvYN: The Elevator is rising again.

casPAR: Where do you suppose it stops now?

pepDvYN: I happen to know. At the Porphyry Ball-Room.

casPaR: The Porphyry Ball-Room! I shall remember that. Up, up, UP, it goes.

REDVYN: It stops now at the Hall of Palms. And now it rises again.

caspar: Where now does it stop?

repvyN: At the floor of the private suites.

casPar: And now it rises, in a beautiful perpendicular, straight up to the Roof Garden.

REDVYN : Do you watch it descend?

casPAR: Why, no. It just descends.

rEDvYN: And so, watching the Elevator shaft, you do not think upon the Mountains, the Extinct Volcanoes, and the Empty Seas, the sight of which you offer to passers-by?

casPAR: Sometimes I hear the music that comes down from the Roof Garden.

rEDvYN : I should like to make you an offer. I should like to stay here for a while. By myself. I should like to look at the Mountains, the Extinct Volcanoes, the Empty Seas, and look from them to the buildings around. Suppose I bought your Telescope ?

casPaR: I don't understand you, sir.

REDVYN: There is no necessity to explain it. Ill buy your Telescope.

casPAR: But then, sir, I should have nothing to do around here.

REDVYN: You could take a look at the Hotel Daedalus from the other side. (He hands Caspar notes for five hundred silvers.)

casPAR: This is terribly unexpected. I don't know what to do with myself now.

REDVYN : Oh, go into the Hotel.

caspar: Go into the Hotel! Go into the Hotel Daedalus! I could not pass the Commissionaire at the door. I could not face the waiters. But I have five hundred silvers. I could goin! A man becomes a hero by doing heroic things. But I wonder if

that is true!

REDVYN: I say...

casPaR: Yes?

REDVYN: Do you know what we are doing? I am trying to enter your world.

caspar: And I, sir?

REDVYN: You are about to enter my world. Or what I thought was my world.

casPar: The Hotel Daedalus.

REDvYN: The Hotel Daedalus.

CASPAR (with resolution): Yes, I am going into it -- into the Hotel Daedalus.

(He walks towards the Hotel as Redvyn stands at Telescope,"
There is a more brilliant flash of lights from the Hotel.)

The Scene Closes.

CACTUS

BY PAUL GURK

Translated From the German by Amy Wesselhoeft von Erdberg

I seethe behind these prickly spines,
My skin grown tough in glaring light,
My finger, thorn...

No bird lights here for food.

Dumb as the stones about me I have hid
Behind a monster's mask

While torture, rage,

Gripped my contorted limbs.

Fed from no other source than mine own green
That drew scant moisture from the niggard rifts,
I fling ecstatic fire-blooms, flame on flame...

I need a desert for such flowers as these.

DRIVEN

BY PAUL SMITH

If some fierce shock would clear my mind
Of consciousness of what I am --
A creature clinging to the sham
Protective shell of human kind --

I think I could be satisfied
To feel the moment's beauty pass,
To see the ripples in the grass
To watch the slow ascending tide.

I know a storm-bent tree where I
Might lie for hours, unsurfeited,
Hearing the wind move overhead,

Watching the leaves against the sky.

But being what I am, I stay
At work upon my monument --
My days are few and quickly spent.

PARIS LETTER

by PAUL MORAND

November, 1928

DURING 1928 the two last volumes of Proust have appeared. The work is now finished in the unusual sense of being complete. *La Recherche du Temps Perdu* becomes *triumphally Le Temps Retrouvé*. His task accomplished, Proust died as do the plants, after having borne their fruit; or rather like those magicians, who are struck down as they pronounce the last of the incantations which put them on a level with the gods. This new Faust had discovered the superhuman secret of eluding the march of time and the lie of apparent reality; having through his artistic creation penetrated into the extra-temporal, he there forfeited his life.

Le Temps Retrouvé is indispensable to any one seeking the key to Proust's work. A great German critic, Ernst Robert Curtius,

was able to do without it, but he is the only one. Pondering with love and respect over the first six volumes, sifting them with the nicest discrimination, he successfully abstracted the essence of the work and forecast its outline without awaiting its conclusion. Read his Essay on Marcel Proust, in which so many mistaken judgements of other critics, incomplete, and by that fact disparaging, are refuted and set right. To us, who in Proust loved the man and exalted the writer to the rank of the greatest, what a satisfaction and joy to find him at last perfectly understood !

Curtius devotes much space to stressing the spirituality of Proust's work. That immateriality pervaded his whole being. Always wrapped in a heavy otter-skin, which, inconsistently, he did not quit until about to go out, submerged in a deep fauteuil from which issued his never-to-be-forgotten phantom's voice, satiric yet kindly, his whole being seemed concentrated in his eyes, extraordinarily large, cavernous, and brilliant. He would talk at great length without seeming to listen to our objections or our replies; but presently as he talked a reference revealed that he had heard all and understood to the point of carrying our idea far beyond what we would have dared express. Even over the telephone his divination of our most secret *arrière-pensées* filled us with admiration and despair. He seemed at once too delicate a being to endure the truth and too omniscient to overlook it. Commerce with him, always delightful, was never without hazard; for the slightest nuance rent his soul and brought long letters of affectionate and pained reproach, letters precisely like his conversation, and similarly mingled with irony, amusing anecdotes, and profound deductions. It has been said many times that he made the night his day. At nightfall he would mingle with human beings; restricted in the domain of action, but enormous when one considers what he brought back from his brief exchanges with mankind. Proust had become so accustomed to this transposition of night and day -- even to the point of extending it to the lives of other people -- that on one occasion during the war, on being summoned to appear at two o'clock before an Examining Board, he arrived there with entire candour at two in the morning. Another time, wishing to show a Rembrandt to a friend, he appeared at the doors of the Louvre at midnight. Incredible as it may seem, he was allowed to enter; for the all-powerful charm of that strange being penetrated the most mediocre and soul-less of men.

He was able to obtain for others anything he desired. I remember meeting him one evening in 1916 at the Larue restaurant and presenting him to my companion, who found favour in his eyes. He wanted to offer her the diversion of music in the deserted restaurant -- whose personnel were, as everywhere, devoted to him -- and proposed, in spite of war regulations, to bring the Poulet Quartet there and then. Off he went into the night to assemble his musicians. We finally became tired waiting, and sceptical of his success,

had returned to the hotel, when he presently reappeared, having torn from their beds the first violin, the second violin, and the viola; the violoncellist alone failed him, and with some reason -- he had pneumonia.

In spite of his infirmity Proust quailed before no fatigue, no danger. We were chatting one evening in the Ritz, when suddenly the window-panes burst with a terrific crash into a thousand pieces; two German bombs had fallen within ten yards of the hotel. "Charming," said Proust, annoyed at the interruption, and hardly raising his eyes, continued his sentence amid the detonations. His body -- scarcely of the earth, arrayed in black and white like a Manet dandy, seemed proof against mere physical attack. But within himself lurked the only menace: Time leading on to death -- his only happiness, artistic creation.

Time -- in its popular conception -- that unyielding Time measurable as is Space, barren and abstract like it, within which we are accustomed to chronologize our artificial and lifeless recollections -- is no more than a meaningless void, which Proust traverses at a bound, to make contact with the real Time, actual duration and spiritual reality, of which through ten volumes he relates the marvels and the imperfections. Here are unfolded without regard to time classification, those experiences and aberrations of mankind -- which no one has more profoundly analysed -- exposed in their essential untruth and unregenerate relativity: love, friendship, ambition, snobism, social intercourse, conflicts of individuals and peoples.

This true Time Proust makes infinitely fluid, now arresting and now precipitating its flow; at the same moment we are in 1914, in 1918, and twenty years before or after. The artist affects ubiquity in Time the better to encircle that enemy; certain characters (Gilberte) have no more substance than a line-drawing and are only present to measure the rise or the decline of a family; others expand in this fourth dimension of Proust's, and "as if mounted upon living stilts, tower up and up."

Time, Time is the principal personage in the work. Proust first in the history of literatures introduces this essential factor of mutations and destinies, turning upon it the blazing flood-light of his genius. Up to now human intellect had created unvarying types of men and super-men, homogeneous, ever uniform from birth to death. Ulysses was astute, Othello jealous, Don Quixote generous, Tartuffe a hypocrite. Balzac has painted a vast fresco but an immobile one. The age of the film, however, has superseded that of the panorama. Proust's work is above all things dynamic: Time has entered into it; these men, these women, this world of people he compounds and pours into his own moulds, fusing together, breaking apart, destroying, altering until unrecognizable,

and transforming into their opposites. Compare the Charlus of the beginning with Charlus of the end, the Saint-Loup, Rachel's lover, with Saint-Loup emerging from the disreputable abode of Jupien, the successive manifestations of snobism on the part of the Duchess of Guermantes and of Legrandin. I do not mean that before Proust no one had described a great lord falling into the lowest depths, nor an obscure adventurer rising to the highest peak of honour; but no one had proposed as theme the action of Time nor had developed this theme with such profundity, truthfulness, and profusion. Read in the second volume of *Le Temps Retrouvé* the astonishing description of a ball which the author attends after twenty years of voluntary seclusion, and where he encounters former acquaintances, so changed that he at first thinks them disguised and considers that he has come upon a *bal de têtes*. From the truism that men grow old with the passing of days, he evolves reflections of a bitter and terrifying beauty; and he concludes with this sentence of prime importance: "I shall not fail to mark my work with the seal of that Time whose image obsesses me with such power, and I shall describe men -- even though it make them monstrous creatures -- as occupying in Time a place much more important than that so restricted one reserved to them in Space; a place prolonged eternally, since like giants submerged in the years, they live simultaneously through epochs so far separate one from the other."

This Time which is the object of his meditations, which he dreads and whose thrusts he parries, numbed by the fear of succumbing to them before his task is accomplished, Proust nevertheless overcame through the miracle of his artistic creation. The force which set loose in him this creation was the spontaneous reappearance of the past (so different from the studied act of memory which registers only barren events stripped of their emotional richness). The past is our Rheingold, the treasure hidden in the depths of our being. "Genius," said Baudelaire, quoted by Curtius, "is only childhood recalled at will." These powerful recollections of childhood and youth, the least of which shatters the false edifice we have built up and re-creates the true world around us, are the paradise lost which the artist must regain. The reader will excuse the long citations which follow; they are necessary. The author in them asks himself why, at different moments in his life apparently insignificant sensations (of an uneven pavement, the taste of a madeleine, the tinkling of a spoon against a plate) had suddenly aroused in him an incomprehensible felicity, which rendered death of no account and removed overwhelming doubts, even to the point of reassuring him completely as to the reality of literary gifts which he had begun to mistrust.

"The entrancing image hovered dimly at the threshold of my vision, as if to say, 'Seize me before my outline fades if thou canst,

and essay to resolve the enigma of felicity which I propound.' I was imperiously drawn to search the causes of that rapture, of the indubitable assurance with which it imposed itself. But that cause I divined, as I compared one with the other, these divers blessed experiences having this in common, that I lived them at once in the present and in a moment far distant -- the tinkling of the spoon on the plate possessing the power of merging the past with the present. In reality the being which experienced in me that impression existed only when, at the coalescence of present and past it would find itself in the only realm where it could exist and enjoy the essence of reality, that is to say beyond the bounds of Time. That being alone had the power of restoring the past to me, the lost past before which the straining of my memory and of my intellect forever failed." . . . "It finds in the essence of things its sole subsistence, its sole delight. It languishes in the contemplation of the present in which the senses cannot provide that essence, in the retrospect of a past from which the life has been drained, and in the prospect of a future built up by the will from fragments of the present and of the past, these too bereft of reality, retaining from such fragments only that which corresponds to the will's utilitarian and narrowly human purpose. But let a sound, an odour, once heard or breathed, return again, existing now in the present and in the past, real without being of the moment, ideal yet not abstract, and immediately the permanent and habitually hidden essence of things is released and our true self (which often had seemed long dead but was ready to spring to life) awakes and flourishes upon the celestial food afforded it. One moment set free from the rule of Time has re-created the man in us, himself released from Time's grasp in order to perceive it. And one can comprehend that such a man be untroubled in his joy -- even though the simple taste of a madeleine does not seem to hold logically in itself the cause of that joy -- and that the word death no longer has meaning for him: existing beyond Time what could he fear from the future?" . . . "But even this vision of eternity was transient. The only means of experiencing further these impressions was to attempt to comprehend them more completely where they were found, that is to say within myself. I recalled that obscure impressions had sometimes attracted my thought in the same manner as had these reminiscences, but hid within themselves, not former experience but a new verity which . . . I essayed to adduce by the same sort of effort exerted in an essay of memory -- as if our most sublime reflections were like melodies which would return to our consciousness without our having ever heard them before. I recalled that I used to fix earnestly in my mind some image which had thrust itself on my attention, a cloud, a triangle, a flower, feeling that there was perhaps beneath these signs a thought which they represented, just as hieroglyphics represented more than the material objects they reproduced. Certainly the interpretation of these signs was difficult but by that alone might a measure of truth be apprehended. The truths that the intelligence receives directly from every-day experi-

ence, retain a something less profound, less necessary than those which life has communicated to us in spite of our resistance. Hence the necessity of interpreting sensations as signs of so many laws or ideas, essaying to call forth from the penumbra that which I had experienced and to convert it into its spiritual equivalent. And this -- was it anything less than a work of art?"

Released from the domination of Time -- since he could escape it by involuntary recollection and live simultaneously in the past and the present -- Proust attains within himself the only extra-temporal and divine reality, and makes contact with Being. In this sense he vanquished death, and we can say that his creative joy is a religious one.

And yet Mauriac has said that God is not found in Proust's work. It would be more just to say that Christ and the Christian morality are not found there. Curtius has already remarked that the will plays no part in Proust as contrasted with Balzac's work in which it is always present, that his characters do not act of themselves, do not need to act, since they are already rich and complete, or else do evil, vulgarly and maliciously -- people like Verdurin, for example, or Bloch, or Charlus. We might add this: what is absent in Proust is the Moral Will. Not one of his characters consults his conscience, nor attempts to prevail against his instincts, to reform, to strive towards an ideal.

In fact, nothing is more foreign to puritanism than the work of Proust, and in this respect we can marvel that it has been received with such enthusiasm by the great Protestant peoples, who as a general thing require of literature moral lessons. They are therefore to be felicitated that in Proust's case truth has been preferred, and the high artistic purpose so sublimely expressed in the death of Bergotte, of whom Proust, alas, was shortly to be the heroic counterpart when writing the last pages of his book a few moments before his death.

BOOK REVIEWS

CARAVAN TWO

Review by Gilbert Seldes

The Second American Caravan. Edited by Alfred Kreymborg, Lewis Mumford, and Paul Rosenfeld. 8vo. 872 pages. The Macaulay Company. \$5.

THE bulk, range, and variety of this second year-book, in my hands for review with only a few days for reading it and thinking about it, compel a frankness outside the range of criticism. Because the book is important and one wants to review it promptly, one cannot do justice -- to the writers, the editors, and to those who may be guided by this report.

I have, therefore, chosen to disregard almost all of the better-known writers represented here, assuming that readers of The Dial are acquainted with the virtues of H. D., Waldo Frank, Edna Bryner, Conrad Aiken, Wallace Gould, Sherwood Anderson, Hart Crane, John Gould Fletcher, Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, and perhaps a dozen more. In the years between 1920 and the first issue of the *American Caravan* these artists have appeared frequently enough in The Dial. I have never felt them to be in any sense "a Dial group" (although I have heard that such a group existed) and I know that another list of writers equally familiar to Dial readers would reveal aesthetic tendencies not followed by some, or all, of those I have named. Yet the Caravan, in part, is a year-book decidedly sympathetic to The Dial's standards. And if I omit consideration of these fine and significant artists I do injustice to the *Caravan* as a readable, interesting, and important book. Their contributions seem to me by far the more interesting; the work of new and lesser known men is nowhere near theirs in thought and feeling and mastery of expression.

But I think that this enforced exclusion does not work a great injustice to the *Caravan* as an idea. For the editors say that it is "a continued witness of the health of our literature, an earnest of a growing solidarity among American artists, and an emblem of a new understanding between a group of significant writers and a body of readers who reject the standardized, the derivative, and the anemic literature still widely accepted. In its catholic bringing together of many writers and forms and varieties of spiritual experience *The Second American Caravan* furthers the expression of a 'large, lusty, loving' America."

This, I think, specifically alludes to the relation between new writers and old. Merely to bring together the people I have mentioned above would be to create an anthology. To set new writers into juxtaposition with old, new forms with old, creates this solidarity which the Caravan calls for.

In one sense, solidarity exists. When I reviewed the first Caravan I suspected that a number of American writers, although invited as all American writers are, to contribute, had not done so because they felt that the editors of the Caravan would not be hospitable to their work. And I thought that the range of the first

issue, although not great, would suffice to dispel that idea and that writers not particularly sympathetic with the aesthetic religion of the editors would accept the statement that "the *American Caravan* does not conform to any preconceived pattern . . . the editors are as hospitable . . . to the American of vast corporate organizations as . . . to that of the solitary studio." I was mistaken. The new *Caravan* still lies within narrow limits. The poetry shows variations of technique and of temper, and constitutes the most interesting part of the book; the prose, which makes up the bulk, might all have been written by two or three people under the influence of two or three others. (I remind you that I am writing particularly of the less known contributors.)

It happens that the major influence wearies me. I cannot give it a personal name because I feel sure that it does not stem from Dreiser so much as from the aesthetes of the Dreiserian mode. It is easily distinguishable. It chooses drab and unimportant things for subject and following a perverted aesthetic theory says nothing interesting about them. It makes a virtue of a dull and repetitious style and asserts that life is dull by making an artistic report of life even duller. It is "strong" because it avoids current sentimentalism, but it is developing a sentimentality of its own, largely about the obligatory meaninglessness of life and the worthlessness of art. These (and any other) theories are relatively unimportant in a man of profound feeling and great creative energy; whatever I feel about the ideas of Ernest Hemingway and E. E. Cummings, for example, makes me think that they are artists in spite of themselves. But writers of feeble powers cannot afford to accept the ideas or the style of others.

John Herrmann's *Engagement*, taking up nearly a hundred pages of the second *Caravan*, is in part derivative, in part wilful, and altogether spoiled. Episodes are introduced and then carefully turned away from the narrative, as if the author said, "I could have used this for purposes of plot, but I didn't, just to show you that plot is not important." Heaven knows it isn't except when it carries on character or develops a theme; but thumbing one's nose at it is worse than unimportant; it is deadly to interest. Morley Callaghan's story, *An Autumn Penitent*, has a more definite skeleton, but seems also to favour the idea of representing chaos by being chaotic. Another section of the prose is devoted not to the objective rendering of details in the lives of inexpressive people, but to variations of the interior monologue. It arrives sometimes at intensity, sometimes at weariness. The way in which most of these writers avoid dialogue is extraordinary and illuminating. When Mr Callaghan's characters are created, they talk; in most of the other pieces, nothing so direct, nothing requiring so specific an effort at creation is attempted. The characters do not detach themselves for a moment from the background of prose, they can neither gesture nor speak. Mr Rascoe's *Gustibus* speaks to himself at con-

siderable length, to be sure; what he says is lewd and entertaining; but he says it in the too familiar tones of *Mr Bloom*. The two pages of conversation to which Josephine Herbst leads us after some eight pages of effort to make her characters far less interesting than they probably were at their conception, is the sort of thing appropriately noted down behind the backs of bus-riders: and theatre-lobby conversationalists. And so with far too many others.

The sense of small lives has been presented in various ways: humorously by Mr Lardner, for instance; glamorously by Mr Fitzgerald; poignantly by Chekhov; epically and dully by Dreiser, epically and with true or false intensity by Arnold Bennett. The Paris school of American writers savagely insists that it shall be presented in one way only -- stupidly. I suspect that nine of ten among these writers do not know small lives at all and would be better occupied writing about the small lives of literary people whom, at least, they have observed. By this time what they say of carpenters and ditch-diggers fails to convince me in the slightest.

And I confess to wishing that a few American writers would school themselves with Benda (or perhaps with Wyndham Lewis) and with Aristotle, would purify their emotions by the simple process of making them their own, and would find a little place for structure, for the old despised brainwork of creative activity.

And now let me say that half a dozen of the older writers are not only as interesting as ever; they seem to be growing in power. They, and not the newcomers, are the hope of the *Caravan*; and what I would like to see is a *Caravan* with them and with something of the side of America the *Caravan* has not yet touched: its lightness, its folly, its splendour, spurious and real. I need not nominate my special pets: where are Thomas Beer and Dos Passos and Mencken (or the best of his followers)? The *Caravan* solicits material without prejudice; but if the editors want to do their job they will have to learn what every magazine editor learns: you cannot be satisfied with what comes in as the result of a general appeal for contributions. You have to know what you want and go and get it.

I hesitate to add a word about criticism. Last year I meditated a bit on the absence of critical work from the *Caravan* and was rapped over the knuckles for it with a "thank the Lord the critics are no longer influential." The two critical pieces in this number are both remarkable; but more remarkable to me is the absence of any critical survey of the very movement in American literature which the *Caravan* represents. It is a work not to be done in reviews of the book; and (becoming constructive) I suggest to the editors that for the next *Caravan* they find a critic to discuss the aesthetics of the first two.

UNDERWORLDLING

Review by Conrad Aiken

Dostoevsky. The Man and His Work. By Julius Meier-Graefe. Translated from the German by Herbert H. Marks. 8vo. 406 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$5.

THAT Mr Meier-Graefe should give us a vividly impressionistic and sympathetic literary portrait of Dostoevsky was only to be expected. He has, as his study of Van Gogh made clear, a natural sympathy with the "rebel" artist, the breaker of moulds, the explorer of chaos. And he loses no time, in this turbulent and excited eulogy of the great Russian poet, in putting this view of his hero sharply before us. He follows, in this regard, the lead of Hermann Hesse, whose *Blick ins Chaos*, a few years ago, endeavoured to crystallize the current Dostoevsky cult and to bring it into relation with the perhaps too-much-talked-about "'post-war" chaos -- social, ethical, aesthetic, and religious. "Dostoevsky" -- says Mr Meier-Graefe -- "neither considered literature in any way the reflex of an inner harmony, nor sought to bestow harmony by means of it...The aim of his creation was unrest from which others fled. And he knew what he was doing. To none of the great visionaries has the task been clearer...To no one has it come more naturally to turn the spirit of unrest to account in literature, unambiguously and without any element of vagueness." And again, ". . . he employed existing methods more profoundly than had hitherto been done, in order to attain a more forceful characterization of the developing human type . . . he possessed the faculty of 'having a presentiment of the future man,' possessed it to a degree bordering on the mystical . . ."

This strikes the key of Mr Meier-Graefe's book; and to the extent with which we sympathize with this view of Dostoevsky we can read it with profit and pleasure. The long analyses of the successive novels -- copious, ejaculatory, symbolical, and presented with a good deal of the hysterical speed of the novels themselves -- are excellent. To read them is in a sense to read the novels again, and with an enhanced understanding. Mr Meier-Graefe is not blind to the many and grave technical flaws which mar even the greatest of them. He apologizes for the fact that they border, often too closely, on "journalism": he connects this acknowledged weakness -- and its concomitants of claptrap melodrama, coincidence, sensationalism, vulgarity -- with Dostoevsky's unwillingness to seek "harmony" through literature or to regard it as a "reflex" of harmony. Literature -- he suggests -- was not for Dostoevsky

an aesthetic affair: it was a form of mystical communion; an effort to understand; an exploration of consciousness. Everything else could go by the board. The aesthete, and aesthetic judgement, was to be outlawed: divination was to be the thing. And if in consequence there was to be a breakdown of literature as "art" -- as Mr Meier-Graefe seems to think likely -- so much the better for mankind and so much the worse for our present conception of "art." We need not, of course, take too seriously this prognostication as to the future of literature. We are free to suspect, if we like, that in this regard Mr Meier-Graefe errs as Mr Hesse did before him: on the far side of idolatry. Dostoevsky was a genius of the first order, one of those rare people who actually do extend the sphere of man's consciousness at a given moment, who serve as its advancing fringe, and who in that sense become "seers." But need this prevent our attempt at an understanding, in cold psychological terms, of the dynamics behind this phenomenon? To be downright, we cannot avoid scrutinizing the fact that Dostoevsky was an epileptic, with all that this must imply. Epileptics, as we can discover from any medical treatise, are predisposed to an excessive sensibility, and to the kind of excessively bright consciousness which such a sensibility will almost inevitably determine. They are terribly and feverishly aware. They are raw souls. But they are also profoundly unstable -- they are inclined to substitute feeling for thought, and to be absolutely at the mercy of what it is that they happen to feel for the moment. Dostoevsky is an almost classical example of exactly this. If we go through his letters with any care, we find him to be an emotional weathercock. What he thinks to-day he will deny to-morrow. What one day he worships or praises, he will execrate the next. He has not, apparently, the least understanding of why it is, at a given moment, that he feels or thinks a given thing. That he feels profoundly, realizes with an intensity almost unmatched, makes no difference. We can grant this virtue, grant the magnificent poetic genius; but we must be on our guard against accepting too whole-heartedly the notion that Dostoevsky was a great prophet, one who was deliberately leading human nature out of the wilderness.

Mr Meier-Graefe is in this respect to be mistrusted. He pays far too little attention to his hero's utter unreliability: he would have it that Dostoevsky always "knew what he was doing." In a sense, Dostoevsky always remained an "underworldling" of the sort which he made so extraordinarily real and terrifying in *Letters From the Underworld*: a creature alternately paralysed and galvanized by an unanalysed sense of guilt. "I am a sick man -- I am a vile man," Dostoevsky began this book; and if with this abject humility went also the usual concomitant (in the epileptic) of mystic exaltation or satanic pride, it is nevertheless true that these alternations constituted a decidedly abnormal mental condition from which all his life he was never to escape.

MR MORE'S DEMONOLOGY

review by Charles Trueblood

The Demon of the Absolute. New Shelburne Essays, Volume I. By Paul Elmer More. sr2mo. 183 pages. Princeton University Press. \$2.50.

ONE might wish, in view of the particular moment of Mr More's appearance in the more active salients of American criticism, that it were somewhat less dispersed with respect to his stated purposes. In his preface he declares an intention to confront with his own practice the much iterated charge that the older critics are too cloistered and aloof in their critical vocations, that their criticism is "irrelevant." Suiting this determination he sets down first his vigorous *Demon of the Absolute*, an essay surely which is nothing if not apt to the moment; and next, *Modern Currents in American Literature*, which if less forcible than its predecessor, is no less contemporary, and certainly is not without its own trenchancies of disposal. On the other hand rather more than the latter half of the volume is occupied with substantial but scarcely contemporaneous pieces on Vaughn, Trollope, Poe, and Borrow, and also a short translation from the *Mahabharata*.

In more than one sense probably it need not be a concern to Mr More or to Shelburnians to prove that he is relevant. To reflect on the substantial sum of plain-dealing which, in the first Shelburne essays, directly or implicitly touches various currently received notions, is scarcely to be persuaded that Mr More is irrelevant. Specific pronouncements on all twentieth-century concerns might not always be available in his uttered thought, but will it do to say that the outlines of them are not to be found there? Mr More does, however, take note of the charge that he is "obstinately" aloof. He takes note of it not merely in a prefatory declaration but by sending forth two essays in contemporary criticism one of which at least seems equal in armament and power of fire to any of his prior launchings. There is a definiteness in such actions which perhaps justifies the expectation that he will have more to say of our current character and being in subsequent volumes. Certainly it justifies the wish that he had said more in his present one.

It is primarily to the initial essay, *The Demon of the Absolute*, that the reader must turn to find Mr More's contemplation of what the twentieth century thinks and is, an essay in many ways

which finds us where we live. Mr More is no non-combatant critic, and his attack upon the Demon, "the Deluder who can take many forms, but who for us appears as the idol of Nature set high on the throne of omnipotence," is one of those excursions into the camp and country of the enemy which ought for their very courage and enterprise to win admiration, certainly to render obsolete the epithet "irrelevant."

"You can see the Demon," says Mr More, "at work in politics whenever men begin to contend for some final unchecked authority in the state, whether it be lodged in a monarch or in all the people. It has wrought havoc in religion by presenting to faith the alternative between an absolute omnipotent God or no God at all, and between an infallible church or undisciplined individualism. But nowhere has it produced more stupid contrariety than among the critics of art and literature."

This is not mincing words. Yet Mr More's still further aggressive by involution of tactics, must seem to some readers as not of the best counsel. The situation surely is not quite as it was in the days when, as he tells us, Mr More was compared by his adversaries to the poisoners of Socrates. He has withstood siege, and the contest is again in open country. Yet still he resorts to what must seem mainly defensive practices. It is a little strange that in so vigilant a piece as *The Demon of the Absolute* only the latter two sections are pure attack, are Mr More's unmistakable demonology. The three preceding are mainly, if not wholly defence, a defence such as Mr More has made before, of standards and tradition.

It is a spirited defence, but suggests question with regard to a defect at least of emphasis in the general attitude which it implies. Are standards and tradition sufficiently defended simply by defending them, by discoursing merely of the necessity of standards and tradition? One readily enough agrees with Mr More, who here agrees with his adversaries, that a chief office of the critic is to assist in creating a general body of ideas in which the artist -- and, one might add, the artist's audience -- could live and grow. And no American critics, surely, have been better able than Mr More and Mr Babbitt to insist, or have better insisted, on the importance of the far view in those who would create or live in such a body of ideas. They have both resolutely maintained our need to hew to the line of the best recorded thought of men.

Yet one must demur if it is their opinion, as they sometimes seem to imply, that simple adherence to the traditions of the best is alone the necessary qualification of the critic or the adequate condition of intellectual and spiritual completion. They have done immensely well, no doubt, to examine and measure in the light

the great traditions, and not seldom to reject many of the notions we currently have held most high. But this does not change the fact that there can be emergent and valid novelty, that there are discoveries which will ultimately be assimilated by tradition, not as yet perhaps in immediately apparent harmony with it. Such passages seem to require in the critic something besides adherence, however fine and deep, to the traditions of the best.

With the critic, and indeed with everyone, as Mr More here and elsewhere holds, the protective humility of common sense is of course a desideratum, and so is original feeling. But more than these because perhaps including these, imagination is imperative, the imagination to live out of one's time, admittedly, but equally the imagination to live in it. The critic is not the keeper of a museum, but the active reconciler of old and new, for if the old lives, it lives in living minds. The spirits of the great and the fine are quintessential, and to know them one must give them at least some being in oneself.

Inevitably there must seem a deep-reaching mutuality between the parts of any such feat, a mutuality requiring imagination for its guarantee, not inventive imagination indeed, but the no less vital sort involved in being able to establish the spirit of tradition in one's contemporary context. If in such a clothing of ghosts with flesh the new is only the formed body and not the forming spirit, one has still to recollect that body is essential to spirit in an animate world. Mr More very profitably suggests that the enduring things are old because they are good, not good because they are old, but if one ask the obvious question, "good for what?" then the obvious answer, "good for life," points perhaps at the need for that capacity to make distinctions on which Mr More and Mr Babbitt have often insisted. Literature and art are after all an aid to life, not life an aid to literature and art.

He can lose his own meaning who exaggerates respect for the old at the expense of his life in himself. Whoever does not receive the classic into his imagination -- and imagination is nourished in the first instance only by a sufficient commerce with one's own world -- will perhaps not know the classic.

Possibly this is all obvious or all implicit in the position of Mr More and the older criticism in general, or perhaps on the other hand it will be said that in our romantic-naturalistic expansiveness we already have too much imagination, and really need a check upon it, as Mr More so tellingly insists that we need a check on our over-running demons of rationalism. Assent to either of these opinions, however, would be difficult. If all this were obvious in the positions of the exponents of judgement and the advocates of tradition, ought we to fall so often as we do into the sterile emptiness of pseudo-classicism? To such a misadventure the

official custodians of the classic seem particularly liable, and what is it if not a failure in imagination? To read the traditions of the best au pied de la lettre, is not this to become deep-versed in books and shallow in oneself? - Are we to be especially surprised that youth revolts from such tuition, youth which in a sense is the time of the imagination, when that great fountain of renewal is first coming into free play? As to the claim that we have already had too much imagination, one is even less disposed to allow it. What we have had may very well be too little of the inner veto of which Mr Babbitt has so much spoken, but certainly not too much imagination, unless one takes imagination in the sense of mere expansionism, which is not a just reading of the word.

One does not suppose Mr More lacking in imagination. It is because he is not lacking in it and yet is also a pre-eminent exponent of judgement that his decided advent into the more current sessions of criticism is welcome. It is because he is not lacking in it that readers who assent to his reassertion of the traditions of the best, who can sympathize with his indignation at the neglect of those traditions, who can applaud his peremptory overhauling of modern demons in the midst of their depredations, may yet wish to object to being left, at the end of it all, with imaginations still unsatisfied. One can very well wish to avoid the mechanistic inane, and at the same time not be anxious to sink into the dusty void of the pseudo-classical.

MODERN ART

by Henry McBride

THE chief question on my mind when sailing for France last summer was that of Miro. Was he worth bothering about? No other name, during the winter, had come across the seas with such insistence, and nothing came across with the name -- no pictures. If he really were worth bothering about it would be necessary, it seemed, to make another of those fatiguing trips to Paris in order to do it there. A traversée "was clearly indicated," as the fortune-tellers say, and so, being essentially dutiful, I went.

I did not meet the young man though. M Miro had himself felt the inclination to travel and had hied himself to his native Spain. I very seldom meet the artists. I prefer not to. They sometimes are so personally fascinating that they prejudice you in favour of their works and that complicates things. Two of M Miro's works, on the other hand prejudiced me in favour of him. No matter what he might be like -- and I heard he was odd -- the two pictures had answered my question and I knew that the artist was worthy of bother. They were at the new gallery, Pierre's, on the rue de

Seine. They were not for sale. (Instantly I had decided that either or both pictures would do admirably for the New York Luxembourg, a mythical institution for which, in my mind's eye, I am always making purchases.) But they were not for sale. They were to adorn M Pierre's private collection, or the artist's own private collection, I forget which. That is the latest thing in Paris! The dealers have become collectors. All the desirable objects of art are not for sale. It is certainly the case, and with a vengeance, at M Paul Guillaume's. M Guillaume looks positively offended if you ask a price. It almost seems to be superfluous, under the new system, to have a gallery. I have a vague notion, for instance, that there were pictures at M Paul Guillaume's gallery on the rue de la Boétie but recollect perfectly all the masterpieces of the private collection and can even tell you their positions on the walls if you insist upon it. I remember them very precisely. One of the members of New York's advance-guard was calling upon Guillaume while I was there, and agreed with me in thinking the collection excellently representative of the push and urge of current feeling and that it would be a handsome act upon the part of somebody to acquire the whole thing for New York. When one or other of us voiced this opinion to M Guillaume he smiled at us incredulously and unhumorously. The pictures, it seemed, were not for sale. Nevertheless some people do seem to know how to get things away from French dealers, even under the new system. I myself have great faith in the efficacy of prayer. I pray, for instance, for the two big Miro's to come to the Gallery of Living Art, or at least to some New York collection, and preferably a public one. For the three big Miro's, I should say, for there is another one, *The Dog Barking at the Moon*, which I have only seen in photo but which I am now persuaded is also swell. Before going down the crooked little rue de Seine to Pierre's I asked one of the younger French modernists of my acquaintance if he agreed that Miro were great and I got a dubious and unconvinced shrug of the shoulders by way of reply. After a moment of reflection, however, my friend twinkled his eyes and said, "Well, I must admit that there is something great about that Dog Barking at the Moon."

M Pierre, when showing me a big Miro canvas which divided itself practically into two bold tones of red and was called *A Landscape*, said -- seeing that I was impressed and would probably stand for it -- "It has the feeling of Rousseau's *Egyptienne*." I did stand for it. I really thought so too. This landscape has the same mysterious spooky quality that made the Henri Rousseau evocation so thrilling. Later I was shown another large canvas that had been touched in with the same spectral brushes. There was something that looked like a dog, too, in this composition and that helped me to realize how effective the *Dog Barking at the Moon* must be. "Very like a whale," I suppose you'll be saying if you are sceptical of all this. M Miro, in truth, does very little

for the dog that appears so frequently to him in dreams. The new art, you understand, is simple. It is almost like a Caran d'Ache dog, or like one of those stylized toy animals that advanced parents now give to their children. But all the same, the symbol has the power of something genuinely imagined and is painted as though to the order of Don Quixote himself. Accepting definitely three such pictures as these mentioned is something, and so J now feel committed to M Miro,

Another allegiance I am about to strike, I think, is with M Le Corbusier, the architect, whose house at Garches, for the Michael Stein family will affect all my ideas for houses henceforth. There are lots of things about it that I question, and which I will question if I ever meet M Le Corbusier -- he too is one of the artists a critic can meet -- but a first glance at the mansion is sufficient to give an impression of something that has come to stay and that is widely to be imitated. A lady I met at the salon of decorative arts came up to me with a beaming face, saying, "You don't have to argue with me about this," waving a hand vaguely at the Ruhlmann furniture and the Bourgeois interiors, "I may not understand it, but I love it." I feel the same way about the Stein house. It looks, it is true, like a refined factory, with its sheets of windows running in horizontal bands across the facade, but there is something about it so persuasively neat and fitted for use that all the older houses in the neighbourhood suddenly look composed of nine-tenths fol-de-rol.

BRIEFER MENTION

Georgian Stories 1927, edited by Arthur Waugh (10mo, 359 pages; Putnam : \$2.50). With one or two exceptions, the English writers represented here have recognized and happily fulfilled their obligation to draw real characters. One of the exceptions is Jean Devanny, whose "lissom" lady and "big man" seem to have strayed from the realm of cis-Atlantic snappy fiction, and another is William Gerhardi, whose Philadelphian quaintly ejaculates "Blast the whole bally crew of them!" To offset these discords, there are admirable contributions by Storm Jameson, A. E. Coppard, J. D. Beresford, and half a dozen others. And not one "big business" plot in the entire collection! The same emphasis on people rather than on story mechanics is discoverable in *The Best British Short Stories of 1927*, edited by Edward J. O'Brien (12mo, 400 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$2.50). As Mr O'Brien points out, the younger English writers at any rate "seem unwilling to permit machinery to uproot them from their tradition" -- an auspicious omen for the future of their art. More than a score of characteristic examples are reprinted here, three of which -- Daniel Corkery's *The Emptied Sack*, Sean O'Faoldin's *The Bomb-Shop*, and Lennox Robinson's *The Quest* -- are already known to readers of The Dial.

The Turquoise Trail, An Anthology of New Mexico Poetry, compiled by Alice Corbin Henderson (12mo, 172 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$2.25). The old Spanish province of Nuevo Mexico, once a fragment of the Spanish empire in the New World, still retains -- as the compiler of this anthology suggests -- a "distinct regional personality," a quality which is felt by poets as dissimilar as John Galsworthy and Alfred Kreymerborg, or Willa Cather and Carl Sandburg. There is a sense of space and of primal force in these "mountains blanket-wrapped round a white hearth of desert" and on these "high stretched mesas" which vibrates the imagination and challenges the poet. Almost two score of them are represented in this collection.

Contemporary British Literature, by John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert (12mo, 196 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$1.50). This manual for the student of current tendencies in literature, with its biographical data, bibliographies, study outlines, selected reviews, and suggestions for reading, is valuable in itself, and not less so as a demonstration in method. One can understand how not all British authors and not "even the most important notices of individual books" could be included, for "among the scores of striking successes it is hard to find a dozen, much less a score, of authors who have anything of permanent value to contribute to literature, and of these the greater part are not the best known." It is not at once apparent to one, however, why there should not be mention of Gordon Craig, Charles Whibley, George Saintsbury, John Eglington, Llewelyn Powys, Percy Lubbock, Logan Pearsall Smith, or Roger Fry.

A Lecture on Lectures, by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (12mo, 60 pages; Hogarth Lectures, No. 1, Harcourt, Brace: \$1) is chiefly an examination of the oral discourse as an integral part of the English university system. Being himself an active principle in that system, he is neither unmindful of its handicaps nor unappreciative of its merits. Quite naturally, he aligns himself with the defenders -- a gracious and a persuasive advocate. Concerning lectures in general, he holds it unwise "to reprobate a human function or a form of public enjoyment which, for reasons however obscure, apparently ministers, without bloodshed or cruelty, to some natural instinct."

The New Russia, by Dorothy Thompson (8vo, 330 pages; Holt: \$3) is a temperate and an intelligent report, set down with an accompaniment neither of head-shaking nor of banner-waving. What the author has seen she has recorded, and her modest disclaimer of omniscience fortifies -- rather than weakens -- the soundness of her conclusions. Of especial interest are the chapters dealing with the status of women under the Soviet government, for here the experiment is most radical and most precarious. It is a relief to find a book about Russia which the reader can follow without being dragged through statistical brambles or plunged into a morass of doctrine.

Essays of Today, 1926-1927, edited by Odell Shepard and Robert Hillyer

(8vo, 392 pages; Century: \$2.25). The twenty-nine magazine essays reprinted here are of several sorts. The five concluding pieces are biographical sketches of various degrees of dignity and vigour, such as R. M. Lovett's of Charles W. Eliot, Tucker Brooke's of Queen Elizabeth, and R. F. Dibble's of Mary Moody Emerson. Against these might be set the lyricism of Waldo Frank's *The Art of the Bull Fight* and the aesthetic un-illusionment of Thomas Craven's *The Great American Art* (of the moving pictures) both reprinted from The Dial. Among the inevitable re-stirrings of educational matters, Hanford Henderson's essay Concerning Endowments, from *The North American Review*, is substantial and very pertinent. The bulk of the collection, however, is given to what the editors term social criticism -- friendly examinations of the American mores. Among these efforts, which vary much in quality, Albert Jay Nock's *Decline of Conversation*, from Harpers, ought to be mentioned for its urbanity and pith. The collection as a whole is of considerable interest.

Spokesmen : Modern Writers and American Life, by T. K. Whipple (10mo, 276 pages; Appleton: \$2.50) is more noteworthy in its specific reasoning than in its general standpoint. It is, in fact, frankly derivative and continuative in point of view from bases already established by such other critics as Van Wyck Brooks and Lewis Mumford. The immediate thesis, illustrated by critical consideration of ten such Americans as Henry Adams, Theodore Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, and Eugene O'Neill, is that the inner life, which is defined as a life of disinterested realization rather than of interested action, has been stunted in America, if not actually deformed, by the hostility of milieu engendered by our universal worship of success. If this is not a vividly novel doctrine it is yet made specifically and interestingly relevant to the ten cases cited. The essays on Dreiser and O'Neill seem particularly well considered.

COMMENT

Re: *Folklore in the English and Scottish Ballads*. By Lowry Charles Wimberly. 8vo. 466 pages. University of Chicago Press. \$5.

THERE will always be some who are in a hurry, and pleased to be shot from ship to land in an airplane so as to arrive in advance of the usual time. Equipment, however, material or academic, is not invariably a part of culture as Mr Douglas Kennedy reminded those who saw the exhibition of English folk dancing at The Art Center last autumn. We have long been familiar with the valuable unimitativeness of folklore -- the green men, dogs, horses, and other sincere impossibilities in varying guises which appear in sagas and ballads the world over -- the sister that as "a machrel of the sea," every Saturday at noon, combs the hair of her brother, the Worm; and newest perhaps in the Danish version * the lover

to be disenchanted by voluntary ordeal:

"You've plighted your word, and now be true,
Give hither your hand, my claw take you."

The lady she gave the bird her hand,
And free from feathers she saw him stand.

W. P. Kerr noted that "strange excellence in the ballads," "not merely of repeating old motives, but of turning the substance of daily life into poetry." Folk dancing at any rate is a natural means of expression like language and presents itself as an antidote to shyness and those insidiously anti-social forms of considerateness which tend to impair innocence without conferring security. It is the aim of The English Folk Dance Society not so much to provide entertainment for the onlooker as to afford people means of entertaining themselves. Though no dancing could be more delightful to watch than that of Mr Kennedy and his group. The spiral swirled attitudes as in certain kinds of ships' figure-head, the "speed and neatness," the "flashes of wit cropping up in the movements," were shapely and gracious, the terminal and divisional pauses seeming more deferentially courteous even than those of the minuet. The Morris dancing in its rhythmic complexity and patter-step, achieved an effect of mastery the more remarkable that the dancers were not a full complement, and suffered nothing apparently in the absence of box hats, wreaths, fluttering streamers, Tom-fool and She-male (a man dressed as a woman) as supplementary coquillage. It was obvious that Morris and Sword dances are not "for as many as will," but for men, and for those that can do them ; the Fool's Dance by Mr Kennedy alone was a particularly wise and unfatigued little whirligig of ability.

There is power in mystery and it is not disappointing not to know the origin of the Morris Dance or the significance of the handkerchief in either hand and to be aware merely that a good dancer should, as the Morris men said, feel the weight of his handkerchiefs. The "purpose" of wands, bells, blue and cerise ribbons tying the bells to the legs, and of miniature music, needs no explanation. Ensnared by the fineness of the airs and steps, one desires that it all be repeated and in certain places in England teams may be seen once a year on a particular day, "about tea-time" as Mr Kennedy suggests, since indigenous and rightful folk dancers appear on the day, not having engaged in self-distrustful preliminary practice.

Partly as novelty but also in itself, the drum and tabor (tabber) accompaniment perfected the grace of the scene and satisfies Henry Peacham's contention in *The Compleat Gentleman* that the musician is a second physician; that his art is a thing which "pro-

longe l'existence, guérit certaines maladies, rend inoffensive la pique de la tarentule, corrige les défauts de prononciation et remédie au bégaiement chez les enfants."

To see fortunately and delicately executed movements is as true an introduction to the skill of music as one could have. Lost words and airs rediscovered by Cecil Sharp in the Appalachian mountain region repaid him for many endurances and are important for speed-ridden and to some extent coreless modern expertness, re-affirming our belief that delightful manners, conversation, and culture, can exist devoid of opportunity and advantages.

=====

===
The Dial - 1928 is a Creative Commons Non-commercial copyrighted project by Matt Pierard, 2024. All images from Wikimedia Commons.